

Tribhuvan University

Envisioning Agents in Contemporary Tharu Novels: An Assessment of Self and  
Structure

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
through the Central Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English

By

Dhaneshwar Paudel

TU Reg. No.: 19070-90

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

September 2021

Tribhuvan University  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Dhaneshwar Paudel has completed his dissertation entitled “Envisioning Agents in Contemporary Tharu Novels: An Assessment of Self and Structure” under my supervision. He carried out his research from March 2021 to September 2021. I hereby recommend his dissertation be submitted for the pre/final viva voce.

.....  
Dr Komal Phuyal  
Supervisor

Tribhuvan University  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Central Department of English

Approval Letter

This research work entitled “Envisioning Agents in Contemporary Tharu Novels: An Assessment of Self and Structure” submitted by Dhaneshwar Paudel to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Komal Phuyal

Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Prof. Dr. Beerendra Pandey

External Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota

Head

Central Department of English

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to people, who supported and contributed directly or indirectly, in many ways to my scholarly journey. First of all, I express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Komal Phuyal, under whose precious supervision I became able to make this research a success.

I am deeply indebted to Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota, Head of the Central Department of English, TU, for his encouragement concerning this research work. Likewise, I express my gratitude to Prof. Dr. Abhi Narayan Subedi, Prof. Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Prof. Dr. Beerendra Pandey, Prof. Dr. Anirudra Thapa, Prof. Dr. Dhruba Karki, Prof. Dr. Aananda Sharma, Dr. Shiva Ram Rijal and Dr. Taralal Shrestha for their cooperation in theoretical discussion while writing this dissertation.

Likewise, I am very much grateful to INSEC Central Office in Kathmandu, Dr. Krishnaraj Sharbahari, Mr. Tika Ram Udasi and Mr. Ashok Tharu who advised for collecting proper documents for this research. Moreover, My deepest gratitude to Dr. Govinda Acharya, Mr. Chhabilal Kopila, M.P. Kharel, KL Pidita who helped me comfortable to enter in this topic. I am grateful to the owner of University Computer and Photocopy Service who helped me in my technical sides of this research. Finally, I could never have dreamt of enrolling in M.Phil program without unwavering support of my daughter Oliya and life partner Bimala.

Dhaneshwar Paudel

September 2021

## Abstract

As the contemporary Tharu novels present, Tharus in Nepal have experienced both success and failure in their attempts to overcome the barriers structurally imposed on them. The formation of agency has taken a very difficult path in their society. The present study explains the exploitation of landlord to bonded laborers, creation of agency and the activities of them in Chhabilal Kopila's *Churiniyan* and Krishnaraj Sharbahari's *Lal Kerani*. In the backdrop of the *Kamaiya* system, this study reads the novels as the documents imagining the tension between the self and the society in quest of change at both levels: personal and structural. For one thing, Kopila creates agency and the agency challenges landlord's exploitation through meetings, *dharna*, and street demonstration. However, the agency collapses in the end, thereby presenting the failure. On the other hand, Sharbahari imagines Tharus winning their freedom, rescuing themselves from the structural discrimination. This study has read the two novels through the critical design that Michel Foucault has developed for the critical concept of body politics. Finally, the Tharu novels hold the story of success and failure of people while making the agents in their society. The imagination helps understand the nature of interaction between the self and the social structure in Tharus society in Nepal.

Keywords: Agency, Critique, Feudal Order, Identity, *Kamaiya*, Structural Barriers, Subjugation

## Table of Contents

Letter of Recommendation	
Approval Letter	
Acknowledgement	
Abstract	
List of Figures	
Chapter I:	
Approaching Tharu Self from the Margin	1-28
Chapter II:	
The Making of Agents: Writing Self in Tharu Novels	29-77
Chapter III:	
Structural Barriers: Challenges to the Formation of Tharu Agency	78-83
Works Cited	84-86

## Chapter I. Approaching Tharu Self from the Margin

The quest for liberation from structural imposition has resulted in both success and failure in case of Tharus in Nepal. This study has been engaged in how elite castes subjugate Tharu *kamaiyas* through the way of economic status and the exploitation creates agency in Tharu self. It examines two contemporary Tharu novels: Chhabilal Kopila's *Churiniyan* (2012) and Krishnaraj Sharbahari's *Lal Kerani* (2017). They have mentioned the structural strength which influences the social structures: economic oppression, gender and racial violence, etc. It is closely associated with social injustice, discrimination, oppression and inequality.

Elite castes exercise power over Tharu members and they are disadvantaged by political, economic and cultural practice. Then, Tharus face inhuman and unfair behavior. It damages Tharus slowly and gradually. The structural causes are responsible for self-conscious agency in Tharu community. Sharbahari and Kopila have portrayed the exploitation of *zamindar* (landlord) to Tharus as the domestic laborer and self-agency creates freedom to *kamaiyas* (bonded laborer). Tharus become bonded laborer because of faulty policy of the state: uncontrolled migration of hill people to Terai and government's policy of providing Terai land to their brothers and relatives as *birta*, *jagir*, etc. The system creates an unequal position in-between the elite caste and Tharu in Terai. Being landless, Tharus start to work as the bonded laborer in elite caste's house; men in the farm and women as the domestic worker. Men and women are behaved differently in term of feminine and masculine body. Women are treated as the object of sexual pleasure when men get physical torture.

### Self in Tharu Literature

Tharus have always fought against the structural inequalities to gain a rightful place in the society. In such process, they have undergone both success and failure. Their fictions have depicted both the narratives of agency and subjectivity as two sides of Tharu self. Tharu novel has no long history and its history starts from when Krishanaraj Sharbahari writes *Futal Karama* in 1998. Tharu novels are around of social oppression, violation and discrimination to Tharus and then they are disadvantaged politically, economically and socially. Tharus depend on agriculture and pray the land as god. They have no conviction of individual possession of motherland. Then, they always believe that land appertains to common belongings and all people can take advantage equally. But the failure policy of the state, rulers sent their agents to Terai for tax collection and they could not control mass migration of elite caste to Terai. Thus, the elite caste captured Tharus' land and they became landless. They borrowed loan for buying medicine, clothes, additional food, etc. by paying off higher interest rate. They could not return it in time and then, they became bonded laborer; men worked in the farm and women as domestic worker. Tharu's contemporary novels: *Futal Karam*, *Lal Kerani*, *Gantabya*, *Bidhawa*, *Muktik Khoj*, *Tiriya Jalam*, *Churiniyan*, *Jittal Patohiya*, etc. have risen about the issue of being *kamaiya*, bondage life of them and painful situation of women. Women have more sufferer situation than men receive because they work from early morning to late evening and face sexual exploitation at landlord's house.

Tharus are land lover and depend on the land. Their main occupation is agriculture. But hill people and the agent of rulers migrated to Terai in mass and they captured the land of Terai in vast quantity. Then, Tharus became landless. Being landless and not having other profession, they had to depend on the landlord. They



started to work as slave and they were sold into landlords. Other castes became free after the restoration of democracy (1990) but Tharu remained bonded up to 2000. Although political leaders and social worker spoke about their condition, they got nothing. Different NGOs: BASE, INSEC, SWAN, *Tharu Kalyankarini Sabha*, etc. worked to bring up *kamaiya*'s condition. Especially, BASE worked in the educational field and INSEC in the field of human right. Then, they created self-agency in their community. They themselves manage different movements as sit-in or *dharna* in different districts and in the capital city how the novelists: Sharbahari, Kopila, Bhoj Raj Chaudhary, etc. have mentioned in their novels. Yet Tharus have become free from bondage life in 2000, they face more pitiable situation because of not proper plan of the government for their settlement. Then, on one hand, they again manage different strikes in the street with men and women and on the other hand, they start to take different trainings: carpentry, poultry farms, vegetable farming, welding, electricity wiring, etc. and non-formal education for adults or formal education for children. They start to work in the farm with business motive and others are in different fields in the market for earning cash. Then, they become free and have been doing work freely. Thus, now they have their occupation and recognition in the society.

### **Contemporary Tharu Novels: A Brief Review**

Tharu novels have shared out about landlord's discrimination, violation and oppression on Tharu *kamaiya* and infringement to women. Then, they have no identity and recognition in the society because they are totally subjugated by *zamindars*. So, this chapter makes an attempt to explore the contemporary Tharu novels: *Bidhawa*, *Churiniyan*, *Futal Karam*, *Jittal Patohiya*, *Lal Kerani*, *Muktik Khoj*, and *Tiriya Jalam* which deal how they become *kamaiya* and what kind of suffering,

bonded laborers face structurally and about the position of women in their own society. The structural brutality creates the self-conscious agency in Tharu community. On one hand, women are marginalized in the Tharu community because no one understands their pain when they become widow. They spend their life as dead person. They become silent and never wear colorful clothes, *chura* and *tika*. They live as a tree in between two stones in the green forest and on the other hand, they become sexual object of *zamindar* being domestic worker. So, the woman is subordinated doubly. *Zamindar* captures Tharu's land anyhow; making fake document or taking compound interest of debt, etc. They make them landless and use them as *kamaiya*. Male only manages the interest of debt although they do hard physical work nearly 18 hours in a day. They face injustice and physical oppression that *zamindar* beats and hits them keeping in trap. The subjugation of *zamindar* produces self-conscious agencies in the Tharu community and they manage the movement against discrimination, violation, etc. of *zamindar* by neglecting their own life. Thus, Tharus have been free from bonded laborer.

Tharu language belongs to one among one hundred and twenty eight languages in Nepal. The Tharu novel has taken space as the fashionable area in Nepal although it has no long history. Krishnaraj Sharbahari's *Futal Karam* (1998) is the first novel in Tharu language. Tharu novels are closely associated with social justice, discrimination and inequality. Landlords exercise power over Tharu members as bonded laborer and they are disadvantaged by political, economic and cultural practices. On one hand, people of hill migrated to Terai after eliminating of malaria and on the other hand, the government sent their brothers and relatives to Terai as *Patwari* (previously appointed as tax collector) after and before Rana regime. They created feudal form of ownership as *birta* land, *Jagir* land and *rakam* land. The

government provided them the land of Terai in large scale which was occupied by Tharus. Therefore, the tax collectors and other elite castes seized Tharu's inherited land. Not having extra-income, Tharus started to borrow the debt with compound interest rate by giving their finger prints on the blank paper. Sometime, landlords made the debt agreement paper adding additional zero. They worked in their houses during the year but they only could reduce the interest of the loan and could not clear the debt. Thus, they started to work as bonded laborer (*kamaiya* and *kamlari*) in landlord's house. Man had to work in the farm and woman as domestic worker. They performed physical violence upon them and used women as sexual tool. They controlled Tharus structurally. Although the state has declared *Kamaiya Mukti* (bondless) in 2000, bonded laborers (*kamaiya* and *kamlari*) are disadvantaged politically, economically and culturally. Thus, Sharbahari, Kopila and Bhojraj Chaudhary have portrayed how Tharus become bonded laborers and what kind of cruel behavior, landlords perform on them, physically, economically, emotionally and sexually in their novels. Landlords provide the debt to Tharus for medicine, children's cloths, additional food, etc. with compound interest rate. So far as, man maintains the interest of debt by working in landlord's farm but their wives and daughters work at their houses as *kamlari* with free cost they are raped forcibly. They have no identity and recognition in the society. The structural causes become responsible for self-agency in Tharu community. Sharbahari and Chaudhary have created Tharu agencies and they generate successful output. But Kopila creates agency with powerful force and they do not remain successful during their life. Ganesh Chaudhary and Maniram Chaudhary have written social novels which give the picture of women. Ganesh Chaudhary deals about woman's awareness that they are not only the supporter but they can create their future own selves but Maniram Chaudhary shares out the pitiable

condition of widow in Tharu community. The widow has no existence and they live as being speechless in the society.

Sharbahari's *Gantabya* (2002), *Futal Karama* (1998), *Lal Kerani* (2017), Kopila's *Muktik Khoj* (2002), *Churiniyan* (2012) and Bhojraj Chaudhary's *Tiriya Jalam* (2006) have mentioned that how Tharus become bonded laborer, What kind of domination landlords perform upon them and how Tharus revolt against of them. In *Futal Karama*, Sharbahari reflects that a poor and innocent *kamaiya*, Kishan becomes silent when landlord, Suryanath Sharma makes the fake paper of fifty thousand rupees adding one zero in five thousand (1). Sharma challenges him to return the money by the next day. Otherwise, he will send him to *Thana* (police station). He and his wife, Seuni become silent. In *Muktik Khoj*, Kopila deals that Budhawa borrows nine hundred rupees for buying children's clothes from Phaniram Neupane because he does not have any source of income. While giving loan, Neupane declares, "I will keep your *lalpurja* with me until you return the debt" (1). Without giving land as advance, he never gives the debt and destitute of reading the debt agreement paper, Budhawa gives his finger prints on a blank paper because on one hand, he is uneducated and on other hand, he believes the *zamindar*. When he does not believe him, he never gets loan. But later, Neupane rejects nine hundred rupees and he declares, "No, nine hundred rupees, it is written nine thousand rupees on the paper" (12). In the way, landlords elude Tharus and they make them *kamaiya* forever. Sharma and Neupane calculate Kishan's and Budhawa's property and they capture everything of them. So, Kishan and Budhawa do not have any way of livelihood and make journey to "Burhan" (Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur). It is the place where they can deforest wild place and jungle area for their shelter. They again become *kamaiyas* there. Sharma shows dictatorship nature and he thinks that Kishan and other *kamaiyas*

should follow what he esteems. He never thinks about other's prestige and never behaves *kamaiyas* as human being but he tries to fulfill sexual desire and rapes Seuni (Kishan's wife). He drags Durpati (daughter of Kishan) forcefully to his home as she does not have any reputation in the society. She cries loudly and villagers listen to her but "none protects her" (7). Woman feels helpless in the crowd as not having any identity. Sharma makes Durpati as sexual object. Thus, Sharma and Neupane grab Tharus' property forcefully and they abuse women sexually.

Women are exploited twice as in their society. Sharbahari portrays the suffering history of women in the Tharu society. Tharus follow different marriage system such as *Brahmin* (arrange) marriage, love marriage, *bidhawa* (widow) marriage, *satasat* (exchange) marriage, etc. and *satasat* marriage system is common in their community. Parents take bride for their son and give their daughter as bride to the same family's boy. The age does not play any role and the child who plays with the mother, has to accept the matured lady as bride. Keuni becomes victimized and she gets married with Sidhawa who sleeps with his mother. She becomes silent and accepts him because of the social traditional rule but later, she defends that she would not return to Sidhawa's house (7). The society never understands her trouble because people are just behind of social practices. Therefore, she falls in trouble not only because of the action of *zamindar* but because of their long-established conceptualization which has been rooted in their society. Then, she makes relationship with Devraj. She dreams that he would come to bring her as bride (10) because she has carried a baby in her womb of him. But when he has gone to India because of economic trouble, he falls in forgery event of his master's daughter's murdering case and spends 15 years in jail. No one cares her but all people blame her calling *papi*. Then, she decides to suicide for death but Ramnath saves her and accepts

her as wife. The social established notions remain the most dangerous. So, they cannot bear the established norms and make journey to Kailali by changing their names "Bhagiram for Ramnath and Deuni for Keuni" (23). They born one daughter named Ramkumari. When Ramkumari becomes young, she falls in love with *zamindar* Prem's son. They both have accepted each other heartily but Prem disturbs to their love and he threatens Ramnath, " you should manage your daughter's marriage with other person otherwise you will not find your family members alive" (36). Knowing everything, Ramkumari remains silent. She does not have any courage to protest against of Prem because of being *kamaiya's* member and she takes poison to death. Keuni does not hold up seeing her daughter's condition and she hangs to death. Therefore, Sharbahari concludes that women are doubly victimized in Tharu community.

Karamadev performs the role of subjugator. In *Tiriya Jalam*, Bhojraj Chaudhary has analyzed the cruel nature of landlord and struggle of bonded laborer. Chaudhary has mentioned the story of about an uneducated, poor, young, beautiful girl, Pyari who falls in love with educated and rich boy, Rajesh and they promise to live together during the whole life. When Rajesh goes to city for his study, he meets another girl named Priya and unfortunately, he falls in love with her. Chaudhary mentions that Rajesh's parents meet Priya and they also desire to make daughters-in-law to her (22). But when Pyari meets Rajesh, she opens her heart and explains, "I have spent many nights remembering you" (25). She deals innocently producing tears in her eyes and keeping her hand on her chest. She makes clear how much she loves him. She has not done any mistake and she cannot live without him. He realizes and promises to live together. Because of her poverty, she has been *kamlari* in Karamdev's house and he always misbehaves her. Chaudhary adds that he drinks

whisky and attempts to "rape her in his bed room" (10). He feels that she has no recognition as being *kamlari* and he can exploit sexually. He never respects her. Time and again, he tries to loot her virginity. He is always lured by her young and beautiful body and persuades her by different ways. He violets her verbally, as Dil Bahadur Chaudhary comments, "Karamadev has always intention to violet her virginity by the way of raping but she tries to make safe her virginity"(i). She feels helpless when Karamdev tries to exploit her. She cannot protest herself as being *kamlari* of him. When Rajesh returns from city, he does not find Pyari because she has already left the village. She leaves and goes away from her village because of Karamdev's cruel behavior. He does not give her any space to live in her own place. He tries to defile her life and she makes her life safe leaving the village but Naina Kumari carries a baby of Karamadev who has forcibly raped her. Being pregnant, she makes suicide. Therefore, he performs the role of suppresser.

Landlords do brutal crime and they try to hide it using money. In *Gantabya* Sharbahari mentions that Jeevraj controls all Tharus and they follow what he makes law and order in the village. Otherwise, no Tharu can live in the village. Visaram has only half *kattha* land but Jeevraj makes a road through his land and Visaram becomes landless. Chhedhuwa borrows five hundred rupees from Jeevraj on the occasion of his daughter's marriage ceremony. He cannot return the debt in time because of the higher interest rate and gives his land to Jeevraj. He also becomes landless. Visaram's father had borrowed two hundred rupees for the treatment of his wife. So, Visaram works as *kamaiya* in Jeevraj's house. He does not have own house and sleeps in a corner of hut. Although he has been matured, he never thinks to marry because of the shortage of money. He only manages the interest of debt but he cannot make clear his loan in years and years. Balkrishna Chaudhary pays seven hundred rupees of Visaram to

Jeevraj. Then, Visaram works in Chaudhary's house and Visaram finishes his debt in four years. Furthermore, Chaudhary encourages him to collect money for buying land. He collects money. He gets married and buys little land but Jeevraj cannot bear when Visaram buys land and he says, "He who has been *kamaiya*, has been owner of land" (22). To damage Visaram plan, Jeevraj burns Visaram's house and Visaram goes to *Nayan Muluk* (Banke, Bardiya, etc.). Visaram decides to plough the land of Hemraj (another *zamindar*) in *Nayan Muluk* as *adhiya batiya kheti* but he is forced to accept to send his 12-14 years daughter, Bhunkli as *kamlari* and his wife has to work with no payment in his house. Sharbahari adds, "Bhunkli has to be *kamlari* in her 12-14 years age and her mother has to work with no salary" (24). Hemraj's son Jayraj who studies in India, has come to home in "Dashain" festival. He has cruel and mischief nature. He is attracted by Bhunkli's young age. When she has been celebrating "Dashain" festival and is dancing with her friends, he calls her to his home. She has to follow *zamindar's* order being *kamlari*. Then, he takes her into his room. He catches forcefully and rapes her. She cries but no one listens her sound and she becomes silent as, Sharbahari expresses, "Bhunkli cannot express about sexual exploitation of Jayraj even to her mother" (44). She cannot express about the event to her mother but she has carried a baby of Jayraj in her womb. No one stands against of him. Jugana and Thagana work at Jeevraj's house as *kamaiya* for years because of their father's loan. They are exploited physically and economically there. When Jeevraj has the trouble of Bhunkli who has been crying the baby of Jayraj in her womb, he calls Jugana into his room and provides foreign whisky with meat. He purposes Jugana to marry to Bhunkli and he adds, "Your couple will be perfect" (56). He lures Jugana that if he accepts Bhunkli, he will dismiss his debt of twenty thousand rupees. He becomes ready to marry Bhunkli. Jeevraj calls Bhunkli's father and he gives pressurize to him



to accept Jugana as son-in-law. He accepts everything because he is powerless and Jeevraj settles his son's problem. Thus, *zamindars* dominate Tharus cruelly and they settle all their problems using money.

Landlords do not show the love to *kamaiya* as much as an animal shows to human being. Ranupariya borrows rupees some time one hundred, two hundred, etc. time and again with Hemraj but he does not know how much money he has borrowed. Hemraj pretends making of a debt agreement paper by calculating all sum of money. He takes Ranupariya's finger prints and sign on a blank paper and he argues that he would write what it needs (63). Furthermore, he persuades him to give his *lalpurja* because he would keep it in bank for taking loan. While convincing, he provides foreign whisky and chicken to him. He shows very close relationship and Ranupariya gives the *lalpurja* with his finger prints on the blank paper. Hemraj takes bank loan using Ranupariya's signature by keeping his land as advance in a bank but he does not pay the interest of debt and anything. At last, the bank takes Ranupariya's land and he becomes landless. Englishwa also works as *kamaiya* in Hemraj house. He looks after the cattle and manages housework activities every time but he cannot decrease his debt. It increases day by day. After then, he runs away from there. Hemraj finds him in the border of India with the help of Indian policeman. He rewards sixteen thousand rupees to the Indian policeman. He takes Englishwa and ties him up on a tree without food, water and anything. Making intoxicated to other *kamaiyas*, he encourages them to beat him. Moti (a dog) shows sympathy to Englishwa when he is tied up by a chain on the tree because he always provided food and other necessary things to the dog and it creates the sound *kyau, kyau*. Other *kamaiyas* do not understand the meaning of its sound but Hemraj realizes that the word means *zamindar murdabadha*. He becomes angry and fires to the dog. He orders other *kamaiyas* to punish Englishwa. If they do

not follow him, he further threatens them that he would shoot them as the dog (81). Getting terrible punishment, Englishwa accepts what Hemraj says and at last, he makes a debt agreement paper of thirty-four thousand, six hundred and forty-seven adding sixteen thousand rupees which he had given Indian police. Thus, an animal shows more sympathy to man than *zamindar* loves to *kamaiya*.

In *Lal Kerani*, Sharbahari and in *Churiniyan*, Kopila have shown pictures of bonded laborer and behavior of landlord. Sharbahari ends the novel in optimistic situation, where men have bright life and women also have taken proper social respectful situation but Kopila has created agency to stand against of brutal and cruel *zamindar*. The agency plays the vital role to make *kamaiyas* free but it ends with pessimistic way because the main character Bujhna dies in fake case. The word *Churiniyan* refers that it is as the supernatural story but Kopila has mentioned the story of *kamaiya*, as Sharbahari describes, "The first novel *Fatal Karam* and *Churiniyan* have dealt the conflict between *kamaiya* and *zamindar*, the agriculture method of Tharu community and love story" (iv). It deals the painful life style of Tharu *kamaiyas*. Ashaphak Tabis comments: "The Tharu novel, *Churiniyan* has mentioned the struggle which seems very painful, reality and energetic" (ix). Although it has mentioned painful event which can be seen in Tharu community, it is energetic. Kopila has explained the painful struggle of Tharu against of *zamindar*. Bujhna, his wife Dukhaniya and Dukhawa belong to poor family and they work at Chatkaluwa's house as *kamaiya* and *kamlari*. The young 20-21 years, Dukhawa falls in love with Sempatiya who works as *kamlari* in Chatkaluwa's house. Chatkaluwa calls Sempatiya in his room and he tries to rape her forcibly. She has horrified situation and she feels helpless, as Kopila mentions, "When she cries, no one listens to her because the room is totally locked. If anyone pays attention to her sound, they

cannot save her" (5). But he does not have any fear and he attacks her with the sexual intention proudly. When she tries to reject him, he kicks on her breast and she dies on the spot. Then, he fulfills his sexual desire "touching her sexual organs of her death body" (6). Next day, he hangs her death body on a tree to hide his crime. All villagers have known the crime of Chatkaluwa but no one dares to expose the event outside and the event is twisted by him using police force. It is explained that she dies by hanging on a tree. Sempatiya's parents, Nageshwar and his wife, work as bonded laborer in Chatkaluwa's house. They do not have any space there because they are exploited physically and economically. Kopila explains that wiping his tears, Nageshwar tries to explain but he stops and weeps. He further describes that Chatkaluwa catches his wife forcefully and he tries to rape her in front of him (31). When Nageshwar attempts to save his wife, Chatkaluwa kills them by using stick. He hangs their bodies on a tree. All villagers gather to see their hanging death bodies. Kopila comments that no one speaks against of him although they have known his criminal work (31). Chatkaluwa meets Bujhna because he has seen his cruel work as being his *kamaiya* in his house and he threatens him not to tell anyone about the event. Thus, Chatkaluwa does not only dominate *kamaiyas* but he kills them and hides events easily.

*Kamaiyas* become ready to do strike against victimization of landlord although they have distressing situation. Dukhawa has been ill but he only remembers Sempatiya. He plays, talks and gets enjoy with her soul. He lies on his bed and cannot stand even. His parents think only about their son's health but Chatkaluwa only demands their work. One day, Bujhna has been busy for the treatment of his son by calling *guruwa*. He deals Chatkaluwa that he has remained in his house because of his son's serious illness. However, Chatkaluwa answers, "you are not ill but your son is ill" (16). He makes clear that he has to do the work when his son is ill. He never

becomes serious in other's difficult situation but Bujhna has to do his duty anyhow. Although Bujhna is poor, he makes conversation with his wife and son and they make plan to gather all *kamaiyas* to stand against of the bonded system which gives no space to them in the society. Dukhawa has been seriously ill but he encourages his father and mentions, "Baba, don't be sad. I will deal everyone about the oppression of *zamindar* and we should create the unified movement against of *zamindar*" (34). He advocates his father that they can create the unity among *kamaiyas* for doing the struggle against of the exploitation. Dukhaniya also desires not to accept violation and she helps her husband and son hand in hand. Bujhna plays the role of agency and he gathers all *kamaiyas*. He makes conscious to all *kamaiyas* about how they are oppressed and he further says, "Many people have felt surprising but no one would feel surprising because time has changed. The government has given equal right to us....When we become united, *zamindar* gives our right surly" (36). He deals them that they do approximately 18 hours but they do not get extra salary. They have to do only 8 hours. When they do more than 8 hours, it is written that they would get additional money. Thus, he gives the way to all *kamaiyas*. They become excited and become ready to revolt against of *zamindar*. They all decide not to work as *kamaiya*. Sikhawa buys rickshaw and Janjirawa works laborer in the market. They do hard work in the market. Yet they have to do hard work, they do not have any debt and oppression of *zamindar*. So, it deals about the suffering of bonded laborer and their struggle against *kamaiya* system.

*Kamaiyas* have no word for blessing to their children even in the festival time because of their poverty. Goharaki and Maghuram are main protagonists in *Lal Kerani* but the Vice President of Village Development Committee, Lal Bahadur Kshetri plays the antagonistic role as being a *zamindar*. No *kamaiya* speaks against of

his cruel behavior in the village because he fines them and burns their houses. Taking supports of local and state power, he subordinates *kamaiyas* because he has the direct connection with the local and state rulers. Therefore, he dominates Tharus structurally. After restoration of democracy, no *kamaiya* becomes free but they remain under the predominance, as Sharbahari analyzes that Chetkant Chaudhary buys the land of Lal Bahadur Kshetri and he pays all money of the land to him but he does not have any authority over the land (8). He takes all money of the land but he never provides the mastery of the land to him. Instead of getting land, Chetkant faces the case in the court which Kshetri has taken to give torture to him. Magharam ploughs Kshetri's land for *adhiya batiya* and Kshetri bargains with him that if he sends his daughter as *kamlari*, he would have chance to plough the land for sharecrop. So, Kshetri contracts with Magharam to send his daughter as *kamlari* to his relative's house. Yet the daughter of Magharam, Goharaki desires to study, she has to go to unknown place as *kamlari* in her child age. She makes her journey to *malik's* house filling eyes with tears. She faces inhuman behavior there such as unhealthy food, poor clothes, torture, etc. Magharam knows the condition of his daughter as, Sharbahari describes; "Goharaki carries heavy load of grass" (30). He goes to meet his daughter but he is not given chance to meet her. She is not sent to her parents' home even in "Dashain" festival or in the marriage ceremony of her *phupu* (father's sister) or in New Year festival. When he goes to bring his daughter, every time *malikni* replies, "you don't need to wait. I don't send your daughter. Return to your home. You may have some work there. You have sent your daughter as *kamlari*. Why do you come to bring her?" (29). When *malikni* does not send Goharaki in "Dashain", he goes to meet her the next day of "Dashain". He puts *tika* on her forehead but he cannot speak anything, no blessing word and she asks him, "Why don't you give blessing, *baba*?"

(80). He answers that he does not have any word for blessing because he is poor. He tries to hide his suffering inside of his soul and cannot speak in front of his daughter. So, Maghuram does not have any word for blessing to Goharaki even in festival.

Women get more suffering than men receive in the poverty. Another *kamlari* of neighboring house of Goharaki, Aasha does not also get chance to go to her parents' house in "Dashain" because neither the *malik* sends nor her parents come to bring her. Aasha and Goharaki create the relationship of *phupu* (father's sister) and *bhatiji* (brother's daughter). Being *phupu*, Goharaki puts *tika* Aasha's forehead on and Aasha expresses; "It is the happiest day in *kamlari* life"(81). Aasha becomes happy while celebrating Dashain. So far as, *Malikni* converts Goharaki into Gori and it is the indirect violence. Very beautiful, young and gentle Maghuram's sister, Santoli gets married with Buddhibilas who goes far away from his house by leaving his wife alone. He desires to study but he does not have the condition. He works as peon in an office in the day, as he writes the letter; "I go to college early in the morning and the office in the day"(70). His wife desires to live with him but she never gets chance. Because of his financial problem, he desires to go to foreign country and it makes his wife very sad because on one hand, she is young and on the other hand, she has been pregnant as, she writes; "I can't live without you"(85). Then, he goes to foreign land and she bears a child. She looks after him every time alone. She faces the economic problem at home. She cannot sleep in the night and has not leisure time in the day. She has hope of future but few months later, Santoli gets a letter with information of her husband's death although her child has not met his father. She feels that she has finished her life as Sharbahari expresses, "She weeps during the day and night"(112). She has no hope of life. Therefore, women are doubly marginalized.

Both men and women play the essential role to make bonded laborer liberate from the exploitation and poverty. Kopila adds that Sharma conducts a meeting gathering all bonded laborers and he persuades them to establish a school in the village. Whereas they are familiar with his egoistic habit and full selfish nature, they support his idea and they sign on the blank paper which he "shows in his hand" (4). But he registers their land in his own name by taking support of the paper with their signature and finger prints. Two months later, he challenges them that they have to divided paddy" (5) because the land belongs to him. Sharma takes support of police and district administration office and he forces them to reject Tharu's application. So, Tharu *kamaiyas* remain under of structural brutality. But Kishan handles the non-violence struggle: burning candle in the day, beating empty plates on the road and *dharna* in front of CDO office and Laborer and Employment Ministry in Kathmandu and they become free from bonded laborer but they have problem food and shelter and Kopila states, "Children cry because of hunger" (13). They are affected by pneumonia because parents have no money for their treatment. Lacking proper plan of the government, they become free from bonded condition but they have more pitiable and troublesome life. Legally, they become free but they are bonded by poverty, troublesome and financial problem. They shelter under trees or open sky having no clothes on the bodies, no food in the kitchen, no job, no shelter, no education to the children, etc. When they settle in the isolated land, *zamindars* claim that the land belongs to them because they have already registered the bank of river, isolated jungle area in the setting of local and national political power. At first, they do not have any right and live as the bonded laborer. But later, they have been free from *kamaiya* but they have bonded by poverty with no food, clothes, medicine, etc. So, all men and women come out to the street. Durpati leads more than two thousand women on the

road. She encourages them that their struggle is not for violence but it is for social change (19). *Kamaiyas have been liberated but they have been facing* more suffering after their freedom because of the carelessness of the government but the movement of women becomes more effective and they play the vital role to manage the crisis. So, women's non-violent struggle becomes effective and powerful for providing freedom from victimization and scarcity to *kamaiyas*.

*Kamaiyas* become ready to accept their death to get right from the *kamaiya* system. Bujhna always makes conscious to all *Kamaiyas* about their right, and oppression of landlord. Although he is uneducated and poor, he always seems as emerged person to develop the consciousness about humanity and he further describes that they work eighteen hours in a day but landlord scolds them and they become silent. Being united, they should oppose against of *zamindars* (36). He would like to make *kamaiyas* free. Other landlords become angry by seeing his activity how he has unified all *kamaiyas* and they keep him in a trap of murdering case of Chatkaluwa although he has no involvement in the case. So, he is blamed as the murder of Chatkaluwa and he is arrested. Policeman kills him blaming as a terrorist. He never cares of his death and never surrenders in front of the power. Knowing the death of Bujhna, Dukhawa and Dukhaniya also die. They never feel regret. They do not think about their life but they only think about *kamaiya's* liberation. They do not become successful in their life but they create the way to other *kamaiyas* to be free and work freely. They die as being bonded laborers but other *kamaiyas* become free in the village. So, they accept their death for demolishing bonded system.

Women take bold decision to create their happy life. Lal Kerani means the morning's bright rays of the Sun and it prefers light after darkness. *Lal Kerani* deals about the advanced life of bonded laborer after *Kamaiya Mukti* and it changes into



happiness by their self-decision. After her husband's death, Santoli has long life. So, her relatives suggest her to remarry with Rajesh who loves her. At first, she realizes that they have added more pain to her and she rejects it. But later, she argues that she can accept him if he comes to her home as the husband (131) because she cannot go to his house as the traditional way. The family members agree her idea and she gets married with him and they live in her house happily instead of going to her husband's house. She takes bold decision against of long-established social norms. She takes self-decision to manage her life. Maghuram becomes bold to return his daughter back and he takes support of the social worker Kumar and social institutions as FNC after *Kamaiya Mukti* program. He gives an application in FNC office against of Kshetri to make his daughter free from *kamlari*, as Sharbahari writes that Maghuram has heard if he gives an application in the office, his daughter would be free from *kamlari*" (87). He makes his daughter free with a hard risk. Goharaki joins in a *kamlari* school. She studies seriously and becomes first in the class. When she is studying in eleven, she is selected in a post of teacher in a school, as Sharbahari poses, "People address her 'madam' in the village and greet her saying *namaste*" (133). When Goharaki becomes a teacher in the school, Maghuram and his wife feel proud and become excited seeing her as a school teacher. Thus, she changes her poor destiny when she gets good educational environment. Goharaki has come from poor family but she gets married with Raman who belongs to rich family because of her performance and they spend happy and successful life. Therefore, in the beginning, Goharaki, Maghuram and Santoli have financial problem and they have no freedom and any existence in the society but at the end, they have happy life because of their bold decisions.

Ganesh Chaudhary's *Jittal Patohiya* (2013) and Maniram Chaudhary's *Bidhawa* (2001) are social novels which have cleared up about the position of women.

Ganesh Chaudhary has taken the feature of conscious woman who searches the right of the woman and the subject of awareness of Tharu. Parents work in the agriculture field but they become interested to their children's education but Maniram Chaudhary has mentioned the story of widow after their husband's death and it deals what kind of problem, they face and how they are behaved in her own society. They have the suffering life in their own community. As being bonded laborer, Bujhna, Nageshwar, Sempatiya, etc. face inhuman behavior of landlords and Rubi faces more tortures in own society as being widow. She lives as being dead. On one hand, she faces financial problem and has no identities etc. And on the other hand, she is controlled emotionally using conservative norms which tie up and keep her in narrow corner as; Hemraj Pant writes that Rubi is cheated by her fate. Her destiny takes away her *sindur* and she encounters hardship during her life (ii). The condition of widow remains totally helpless in her own society. Rubi finishes everything of her life after her husband's death. She has nothing and she has not taste of food even. Biru and Rubi have happy life although they are poor. He has remained the piece of heart to her and he always dreams the happiness of her life. But when he dies, she is doomed and has staining life. She is blamed as *papi* in the society. No one understands her affliction and she expresses; "No one helps me" (7). Rubi is young and beautiful as attractive flower but she has curled up when her husband die. She adequately contends; "There is no one to understand my suffering" (11). She faces discrimination when the husband dies. It shows that woman has no freedom and any space in the society. They have to accept what the society delivers them. Although they have the strength to solve problem, they dry up as the old leaf of a tree. Their existence is controlled by the traditional long-established norms. The society never uplifts women and never provides the open platform for their personal career. Rubi thinks that she is young as

flower and can manage every problem. She can manage the respectful situation in the society but after her husband's death, she spends her life as dropping dew and cold wind in the winter. She feels tired and has nothing in her life because the society never cares and gives space to her. Thus, she faces inhuman behavior in her own society.

The society becomes the main cause for woman's trouble. Man and woman are behaved differently in Tharu society. Male is encouraged for 2nd marriage after his wife's death but woman is neglected for the same condition, as Rubi says, "I would not like to be introduced as the wife of two husband" (15). She has fear of the society. She is forced to reject other man as the husband and she stays as a stone, being silent. Her prestige becomes more important than her happiness is. She feels tired and hates the society which keeps woman in a cage as a bird. She cannot speak against the social rules and she compares herself as rotted flower. She has no present and future life but she lives in the past memory. She has the heavenly life with her husband although she is poor, having shortage of food and living in a small house. But when Biru dies, Rubi has terrific life because she has no space in the society and no one cares her. Maniram Chaudhary portrays that no one helps the widow in the society (18). She has fear of *dharma* and she hates herself because she is tied up with traditional social concept. Her life has been as a tree between two stones in the green forest. She feels thirsty as an animal in the desert. She feels music as weeping sound of humanity. She has no smile on her lips. She descends that she has no fate of happiness (28). She spends her young age with full of suffering because she has been the widow. She weeps and cries but it becomes soundless in her society. She remains under of white *sari*. The society never allows her to make-up and wearing colorful clothes, *chura* and *tika*. Her life has been as a ragged cloth or useless thing. She lives

as the dead person and asks, "Why did god give the birth to me?"(30) She forsakes her own life. Maniram Chaudhary blames that people only notice the agony of widow but they never desire for solving their problem and creating smile on their lips. So, Rubi does not face only the trouble of poverty but the long established social thoughts oppress her and she does not have personal freedom.

Ganesh Chaudhary deals that Tharus are rich in their culture such as language, religion, song, music, feast, festival, etc. as *Chhotkimar, Badkimar, Asmaramati, Ahiraban, Rambihaga, Sakhiya nachha, Jhumra nachha*, etc. They are the property of their society and they should make safe them as the heritage. Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary comments that Ganesh Chaudhary has mentioned *milan, bichhod, maya, prem, dharma, sanskriti, chalchalan, harsa* and *bismat* of Tharu community in *JittalPatohiya* (iv) but their traditions have been fallen down. So, he wants to preserve their values and norms. Other castes may not save their culture but they have to protect their culture by own selves. Parents remain in the farm and they do hard work from early morning in the winter season and in the hot mid-day in the summer time with extreme physical labor. But children are on the way to college or school in the same time. Sons and daughters are given equally opportunity of education. Sushila meets Pramila's father Buddhiram who has been doing hard work in the farm and she asks him, "Has Pramila gone to college or not, I have been late today? (1). He answers wiping sweat on his forehead that he has no idea about it because he is at the farm and his daughter is at home. The parents desire to teach their daughter and they search educated husband for their daughter as, Ganesh Chaudhary adds that Buddhiram belongs to countrymen, straightforward, effortless, innocent, etc. and he desires to make his daughter educated and his *damaduwa* (son -in -law) would be educated (4). He desires to see the modern life style of his daughter but not as traditional.

Preserving the past traditional norms, he searches new way of life style as, he calculates: "We should shift according to the time and make plan as the time" (34). He works traditionally but he wants to make his children educated. Thus, following the traditional norms, he jumps to the modern concept.

Young generation follows the modern life style not damaging the traditional norms. Children study in school or college and they can use the modern technology such as bike, mobile, etc. and they do not need to work as their forefather. Now, daughter-in-law has free time and they become busy in watching mobile. They can make the journey using motor bike or car. They do not need to do housework like the past time as, Ganesh Chaudhary refers to that the time has changed. Daughter-in-law finishes the plantation and collection of crops in a single day which previous generation take the time of one month. They finish the journey of one day in an hour and they do not need to spend the time for *begari* of *zamindar*. So, they can move according to the time. Pramila is confidence about her life and she gets married with Bhagiram and they have managed their life. But unfortunately, Bhagiram marries Ramkali as second wife. Pramila does not accept it as the past time and she gathers Tharu leaders in her house and she challenges Bhagiram and Ramkali, "I don't know but you know and manage to eat" (30). She does not feel afraid and expresses everything clearly in the mass of people. The daughter-in-law does not bear as the previous time. When they have any difficulties, they express everything in meetings clearly. The *patohiya* (daughter-in-law) seems aggressive against the oppressive activities. So, Chaudhary deals that the traditional concept of Tharu community has been changed and they have followed the modern way; education, using new technology, modern concept etc. but they would not damage their cultural heritage; folk song, folk music, norms and values because they are their cultural property. So,

while following the modern life style, the young generation should preserve the traditional values.

Tharu novel has no long history and its history starts from 1998 after publishing *Futal Karama* of Sharbahari. After 1998, they have taken large space in Nepali literature and they are around of discrimination, inequality, oppression, injustice and confrontation of bonded laborer. On one hand, Tharu novelists have described about exploitation, repression, tyranny, inequity, etc to women in their own society because of long established social norms and value and on the other hand, bonded laborers (both men and women) are discriminated by *zamindars* in their novels. Furthermore, they have discussed how Tharus have been landless and bonded laborer. When elite castes seize Tharu's land structurally and they become landless. Not having extra-income, they collect debt for buying medicine, children's clothes, etc. from *zamindar* with compound interest rate, and some time, they make the debt agreement paper adding additional zero. They cannot return the loan in time and they start to work as bonded laborer. Then, men have to work in farms and women as domestic workers in the *zamindar's* house. They are disadvantaged politically, economically, and culturally. They have no identity, recognition and security in the society. When man works as *kamaiya*, he only balances the interest of debt and his wife or daughter works without salary. *Zamindars* use women as sexual object and some time, they kill them when they need to face pregnancy problem. So, they are doubly marginalized. Man faces injustice and physical oppression because *zamindar* hits and beats them regularly. They are violated structurally and the structural causes create the self-conscious agency in Tharu community. The agencies fall in trouble but they never stop their movement. They handle non-violent movements time and again with men, women and children as burning candles in the day, beating empty plates on

the road, etc. Some of them die during the time of movement and others fall in trouble but they become free at last. They work in the market freely. Some of them work in their own agro-farm for growing vegetable and others do skillful work. Their children are on the way of school or college in spite of bonded laborer. Although they are poor, have the problem of food, clothes and medicine, they have been free from debt, discrimination and violation of *zamindar*. Thus, they have been free and have been spending happy life now.

### **Methodology**

Tharus are indigenous in Terai but elite castes settle there after the eradication of malaria and they capture the land of them. Thus, on one hand, they become landless and on the other hand, they collect loan from landlords for buying clothes, food and other necessities with compound interest rate. They cannot return the debt in time. Then, some of them become bonded laborer in landlord's house and others start to plough landlord's land for *adhiya batiya*. Landlords bargain with them that if they desire to plough the land, they have to send their daughters as *kamlari* with little salary. Furthermore, when man becomes *kamaiya*, his daughter or wife has to do landlord's work in free cost. Daughters like to study but they cannot object their father's decision of sending them as *kamlaris*. Gayatri Spivak Chakravorty explains that subaltern is dominated and they cannot speak. The structure of exploitation is compounded by patriarchal social relations and the division of labor. The subalterns are exploited by the bourgeois society; man gets proper salary and woman is more marginalized because of the sexual division of labor. When woman is poor or subaltern, it becomes more problematic because man and woman are behaved individually. Woman is more deeply in shadow. Thus, I have used Spivak's conviction of subalternity as critique of humanism. *Kamlaris* remain far away from

their family members and they are not allowed to return to their house even in festivals and their relative's marriage ceremony because they have to be busy from early morning to late evening. They feel alone in mass. They weep in the night time. Fathers negotiate with landlords for sending them as *kamlari* and they face humiliation and exploitation in their house. Thus, man being *kamaiya*, they face financial problem but woman as bonded laborer; they face economic as well as sexual exploitation.

Furthermore, landlord performs the power in different structures and Tharus face inhuman, brutal and cruel behavior of them because of their poverty. When they provide their land to Tharu for sharecrop, they have to send their daughter as *kamlari*. When man becomes *kamaiya*, they get little salary but their wife or daughter has to serve the master with free cost. Afterwards, landlord emerges the issue of economic problem and it leads poor people to social harassment; man as laborer works on the field and woman as domestic worker. Landlords forcefully fulfill their sexual desire with them but they cannot speak against of the exploitation, sexual harassment and inhuman nature of the landlord. Bonded laborers have to maintain different position as being man and woman. Therefore, I have mentioned Foucault's notion of "body politics" too. Landlords give physical punishment to men and sometime they use the power of administration to threaten them but they keep women in trap and perform sexual intercourse. They become silent because when they oppose, landlords kill them and hide the case easily. Moreover, Tharus send their daughter as *kamlari* because they think that they do not have any extra economic burden. Thus, fathers sell daughter as *kamlari* to remove his economic crisis. Landlords behave them individually as man and woman. Man gets salary but woman works in landlord's



house in free cost. Man gets physical torture as being *kamaiya* but woman receives sexual exploitation. Therefore, body plays the role to occupy the space in the society.

The study focuses on the quest of dignity and honor in the life of Tharus as imagined in the literary works. It has provided a new insight of Tharu's distinctive identity and it attempts to examine how Tharu literature has played the vital role to inscribe the exploitation of elite caste to Tharus as bonded laborer and it generates the self agency from the same community. The novels studied for the research are originally written in Tharu language. The extracts that I have used in the analysis section are my own translation.

### **Departure**

Tharu novelists have dealt the unbearable situation of *kamaiyas* when they work in *zamindar's* house as bonded laborer. Only a meager number of studies have been conducted to see the sociological or anthropological status of the people. The artistic and imaginative aspect of the Tharu life has remained ignored so far. Their identity is under question because of the feudal culture present in their society. They have also responded to this situation in their life. In fact, Tharu's resistance against landlord in literature appears as newfangled area. Kopila in *Churiniyan* and Sarbhari in *Lal Kerani* have mentioned Tharu's resistance and their resistance is for equal recognition in the society. Their struggle to win over the structural limitations occupies the central space of analysis in this study.

### **Organization of the Chapters**

Chapter one focuses on about the introduction of both texts: Kopila's *Churiniyan* and Sarbahari's *Lal Kerani*. They have mentioned that the structural strength influences the social structure. The agency becomes engaged for searching *kamaiya's* liberation and the quest for liberation from structural imposition has resulted in both

success and failure in case of Tharus in Nepal. Kopila and Sharbahari create agency in Tharu community to remove *kamaiya* system in *Churiniyan* and *Lal Kerani* and some of them die in the moment but others become successful. Besides, this section also includes the general survey of previous studies and organizations of the entire dissertation.

Chapter second seeks to examine that contemporary Tharu novels locate self into ways: Agency and Subjectivity. In quest of rightful place in society, Tharus have always aspired to overcome the structural imposition upon itself. *Churiniyan* and *Lal Kerani* portray both success and failure of Tharu self in their struggle. The agency comes from Tharu community and conducts meetings with other *kamaiyas*. Furthermore, Kopila deals in *Churiniyan* that Tharus are subjugated by local landlords and they come out from subduing managing different strikes but the agency gets excreting waste products from the body in fighting. But in *Lal Kerani*, Sharbahari creates agency who fight against the exploitation of landlords and they become successful to abolish *kamaiya* system.

The last chapter concludes the close examination of *Churiniyan* and *Lal Kerani* that how landlords exploit Tharus that Tharus are only the source of labourer. Landlords have authority to operate the states power. Both writers have created agencies to stand against of the exploitation of landlords in their novels. Kopila's agency becomes failure to remove *kamaiya* system and he faces death during the struggle time. But Sarbahari's agency becomes successful to remove the *kamaiya* system and the agency makes liberate ownself and makes free to other *kamaiyas*.

## Chapter II. The Making of Agents: Writing Self in Tharu Novels

Contemporary Tharus novels locate self in two ways: agency and subjectivity. In quest of rightful place in society, Tharus have always aspired to overcome the structural impositions upon their self. Tharu novels portray both the success and failure of Tharu self in their struggle. This chapter makes use of Chhabilal Kopila's *Churiniyan* (2012) as the loss of Tharu subject, while Krishnaraj Sarbahari's *Lal Kerani* (2017) presents Tharu self as agent winning victory over the structural impositions. Both these novels help to understand the aspirations of contemporary Tharu novels in figuring out the quest for recognition in the existing social configuration.

Two novels selected for the study are Kopila's *Chiriniyan* (2012) and Sarbahari's *Lal Kerani* (2017). The texts have raised the subject matter of *kamaiya*; their suffering and their struggle against the structural domination. The landlords first capture almost Terai land and they perform to dominate Tharus. They lure Tharus by showing different plans of development for taking their signature and thumb prints on the blank paper. They provide loan to them adding additional zero or by changing the number of debt in the loan agreement paper. Thus, they make Tharus totally landless. Furthermore, not having any job, Tharus borrow money to buy medicine, clothes, additional food, etc. from landlord with the compound interest rate. So, they cannot return it in time and the whole family members become *kamaiya* in the landlord's house. They face humiliation, exploitation and suffering there. They do not have any existence of human being. They are subjugated and oppressed by landlord. Then, different organizations start different movements to remove *kamaiya* system but they never become successful to abolish the system because there is no involvement of *kamaiya*. Kopila explains the extreme exploitation of landlords upon Tharus that the

landlords keep men for the field work and women as sexual instrument. When they oppose, landlords kill them and they can hide the case easily with the help of administration. They cheat Tharus not giving authority over the land although they have already taken money of the land because they can adjust the case with making effective setting of the court. They follow the structural power to dominate Tharus. Subsequently, the agency takes place to advocate other *kamaiyas* and doing struggle against of the previous structural power. The agency guides them through meetings and street demonstrations. All *kamaiyas* become excited to do struggle against of the feudalism. They become somehow free but the agency is trapped or blamed in the fake case. Moreover, the agency manages different strikes against brutality of local feudal and he tries to avoid *kamaiya* system although he cannot make safe himself. Sharbahari also creates agency from Tharu community and the agency faces different troubles during the struggle time. They face inhuman behavior of landlords but they do hard work and manage different movement. Then, they become free. Although they have poor economic condition, they perform different movements as street dramas to threaten landlords who have kept *kamaiyas* in their house. At last, they become successful to make all bonded laborers liberate and they spend their life being self dependent in their society. Therefore, the agency faces structural elimination in *Churiniyan* but in *Lal Kerani*, the agency breaks the structural power and they make free to ownelves and all other bonded laborers.

Tharus become landless when elite caste captures Terai land after the eradication of malaria after and before Rana system because they get chance to migrate to Terai. After holding Terai land, they rule upon Tharus and make them bonded laborer for the reason that on one hand, Tharus have no authority over the land and they have no job to manage their livelihood. So, the landlords force them to

send their children as *kamaiya* in their house if they want to plough their land for *adhiya batiya*. On the other hand, they take loan in the compound interest rate and Tharu cannot return it in time. Thus, they become *kamaiya* generation to generation and afterwards, they dominate them by physically and sexually. Kopila explains that Chatkaluwa uses the power to Bujhna, Nageshwar and their family members. He demands only work when Bujhna's son has fallen seriously ill. He dominates Nageshwar and his family members cruelly. He tries to rape his wife and young daughter, Sempatiya. He holds the state power such as administration and court. Subsequently, he kills them and dismisses the cases with the help of administration. Bujhna plays the role of agency and he advocates all *kamaiyas* to fight to gain their right. He conducts different meetings with them to make them aware. Afterwards, they become aware and fight against of the brutality. But the structural power cannot bear Bujhna's activities and he is killed. But Sharbahari creates strong agency in his novel. Although Maghuram ploughs Lal Bahadur Chhetri's land for share crop, he sends Goharaki as *kamlariat* first but later, he takes bold decision to make her free from bonded life. She studies and becomes independent after taking a job in a school. She makes other *kamlaris* liberate. She threatens landlords who have kept *kamlaris* in their house. Maghuram also becomes the President of *Kamlari Mukti Morcha* and he fights regularly to make bonded laborer literate. Therefore, both the father and daughter become free from bonded laborer and they remain successful to make other bonded laborers free from *kamaiya*.

### **Structural Elimination of Tharu in *Churiniyan***

Tharus are subjugated by local landlords but they come out from subduing managing different strikes and the agency gets excreting waste products from the body in the fighting. They are land lover and depend on agriculture but hill people

captured Terai land in vast scale after the eradication of malaria and after and before Rana regime. So, Tharus became landless. They faced the trouble of loan with compound interest rate and they became *kamaiya*. Thus, Tharus themselves create different strikes to become free from exploitation and some of them die during the struggle. Thus, this section makes an attempt to explore the structural elimination of Tharu in Kopila's *Churiniyan* (2012). Being *kamaiya*, they remain under victimization; men with physical trouble and women as sexual instrument at landlord's house. When they oppose landlords' cruel nature, they get punished for death and the landlords can hide the case easily with the help of administration. So, Tharus are suppressed by structural power. Thus, NGOs: BASE, INSEC, UNICEF, etc. try to manage different strikes to make free Tharus from bonded life but they never become successful because there is no involvement of Tharu *kamaiya* for long time. It makes clear that without agency from Tharu *kamaiya*'s community, the motion would not be effective. Therefore, agency from *kamaiya*'s community comes to hold different movements. The agency conducts different meetings and *kamaiyas* are guided properly. Then, they announce different strikes and challenge the earlier constructional power through the mass street demonstration. They become free but previous structural authority does not tolerate and it surrounds the agency with fake issue. At last, the agency is killed with the help of state administration. Thus, the structural power tries to break the chain of agency who has led the society regularly.

Tharus are indigenous in Terai and they belong to agricultural occupation. The hill people and agents of the ruler captured Terai land and they make Tharus landless. On one hand, not having other occupation, they became *kamaiya* in *zamindar's* house and remained as the essential source of labor and on the other hand, they were never acknowledged by national identity because the state's existence became connected

only with ruling elite caste. Thus, being landless, Tharus are forced to settle in limited area. They borrow the loan for medicine, clothes, additional food, etc. from landlords because they have no other extra income. While collecting the loan, they are cheated by adding additional zero or changing number of loan in the debt agreement paper. They have to pay compound interest rate. Then, all family members have to work nearly 18 hours in a day but their loan increases day by day instead of decreasing. So, they become *kamaiya* generation to generation. Men work physically in the field and women as domestic worker. *Zamindars* make women sexual instrument openly. When they feel any obstacle, they kill them and hide the case by taking help of administration. They follow the structural power which challenges social norms and values. Chatkaluwa (landlord) forcefully rapes Sempatiya and her mother and he kills them. He kills Nageshwar when he opposes the cruel behavior of the landlord. He hangs their dead bodies on a tree and proves that they have hanged to die themselves. He only demands the work from Bujhna and other *kamaiyas* have the same condition. Dukhawa, the son of Bujhna falls in serious illness but Bujhna does not get any time to look after him. Landlords subjugate *kamaiyas*. Therefore, NGOs: BASE, INSEC, UNICEF, etc. try to uplift their condition. They manage different kinds of strikes to make them free from bondage life but they become failure because of lack of agency from *kamaiya*'s community. So, among *kamaiyas*, Bujhna plays the role of agency to remove them from bonded laborer. He gathers and shares the painful events of *kamaiyas* with them. He conducts meetings again and again. He guides and encourages them to do struggle against of the previous structural domination and gaining authority in the society. He guides them to challenge the structural power through meetings and street demonstration. All *kamaiyas* become aware to manage the movement against of the local feudal authority. They become somehow free and

start to do work freely. But the local landlords cannot bear the activities of Bujhna and Bujhna is blamed in a forgery case where he does not have any involvement in the case. At last, he is killed by blaming as a terrorist for taking revenge because he has played effective role to make Tharus free from bondage life.

Tharus get suffering under the operation of the elite caste because of the state's wrong policy. Tharus live in Terai as indigenous but they become marginalized when malaria has been controlled. After then, it becomes possible for the hill people to settle in Terai. When the politics of elite caste mentions into the modern state of Nepal, it is defined by national boundaries and centralized political control. It politicizes of the group identity that it hides a little or no political significant of Tharu community. Terai is the central to the economic validity of the state and Tharus has been politically marginalized in that region and they are threatened with suspicious by hill-based elites who rule the country. Arjun Guneratne Observes that the life for most Tharu has changed drastically in five decades because Terai has become the focal point of the largest population carry in Nepal's history. It has guided hill people in their hundreds of thousands to set in Nepal's productive low land. The procedure has been uplifted by the state as a way to integrate its authority over the territory whose population becomes view with wariness (20). Tharu has essential identity in Terai. However, the "failure policy of national integration" creates a coherent and typical cultural identity. As in multi ethnics state, national identity formation is based on the culture and practice of ruling elites and their kin. So, subaltern Tharus have no space in Terai. Tharus remain under the lack of integration into administration of the state and to the state patronage. They become an essential source of labor. The 'bureaucratization of revenue' administration marginalizes Tharus in Terai and it benefits elite caste with close ties to state power. The state policy should provide



equal opportunity to all castes but because of elite caste in ruling position, they provide everything to own community people, it helps Tharus to be landless. Bujhna works in Chatkaluwa's house as *kamaiya*. Chatkaluwa always demands his work in any condition. He does not go to Chatkaluwa's house to work because of his son's serious illness and he questions, "Are you ill? And your son has been ill" (16). He has to do his work even in his son's poor health condition. He feels that his work is important than Bujhna's son's health. Then after, he cannot look after his son in his serious illness. Young and beautiful Sempatiya works as *kamlari* in Chatkaluwa's house. She is harassed sexually there but she cannot leave because she does not have any identity than *kamlari*. When he remains alone at his house, he attacks her with sexual intention. She tries to reject him but he hits on her breast and she is killed on the spot. He hangs her dead body on a tree beside the road. Policemen know the event and they come to investigate about it. Kopila notes that the report is made; she has hanged herself to die (6). Although all *kamaiyas* have known that she is killed but they accept the report and the report takes space in the village because Chatkaluwa has good relationship with the ruler and he becomes successful to change the report. The *kamaiyas* do not have any connection with the rulers and they remain under the exploitation. The bureaucrat and administration never support Tharus but they only support their own caste. The state policy does not provide equal opportunity to Tharus because elite castes remain in ruling position. Therefore, because of the wrong policy of the state, Tharus become *kamaiyas* and they remain under the discrimination.

Bujhna and his family members become *kamaiya* age to age because of their loan at one time. After eradication of malaria and before and after *Rana* regime, elite castes occupy the land which has been used by Tharus in Terai. Then, Tharus have no authority upon the land and they are forced to settle in limited area. They have no way

of extra income to buy medicine, clothes, additional food, etc. and they borrow debt from landlords. When they take the loan, landlords capture their *lalpurja* of their remained land and they are forced to sign and to give finger prints on the blank paper. Landlords make the loan agreement paper according to their wish; sometime adding additional zero as Rs. 20,000 for Rs. 2,000 and sometimes increasing number but they make *kamaiyas* clear verbally that how much money they have taken, is written on it, as in *Muktik Khoj*, Kopila explains that Budhawa burrows nine hundred rupees for buying children's festival clothes from Phaniram Neupane (landlord). Later, Neupane rejects nine hundred rupees and he claims, "No nine hundred rupees but it is written nine thousand rupees on the paper" (12). He adds extra zero and converts hundred into thousand. Budhawa does not know about Neupane's intention because he has already signed on the blank paper. At last, Neupane calculates Budhawa's property and registers his property in his own name. Thus, Budhawa's family becomes totally landless and they remain bonded laborer of Neupane. Making fake paper, elite castes make Tharus bonded laborer. Bujhna has been *kamaiya* of Chatkaluwa for long time. He works during the day from morning to late evening but he does not get proper salary. His son and wife work there without payment. He desires to be free from bonded life but he has borrowed 10-12 hundred rupees to buy cattle from Chatkaluwa. Bujhna answers his son that he has borrowed 10-12 hundred rupees but he does not have idea how much loan he has to pay to Chatkaluwa (8). He has not seen the loan agreement paper. He can return the loan but he is not sure that either the landlord will leave him or not. His family members work full day in Chatkaluwa's house but on one hand, their loan increases day by day and on the other hand, they do not have any idea about their actual loan. It depends how much he deals, they have to pay. They cannot make clear the loan because they work all time in his house but he adds the number

again and again in the debt. It increases day by day. Thus, Bujhna and his family members become bonded laborer generation to generation.

Bujhna's self-examination creates the role of self-formation, the idea of agency. The local landlords maintain the concept of autonomy and the self-ruling figure to dominate Tharus. The structural account of autonomy creates different higher and lower status and the account of autonomy is connected with historical practices. The individual action is not an individual subject but as the 'social context'. Landlords try to conduct themselves; they exercise their belief and attempt to perform their movement. They become creative because the social context influences them. However, the subject cannot be autonomous because it becomes impossible for them to exercise their reason because it becomes outside from the social context. Different people adopt different beliefs and take different actions; it depends upon the person rather than the society and person determines what action to perform. Individual is the vehicle of power and self-examination which creates the role of self-formation. James Wong analyses that self-examination develops "agency against autonomy" (277) and it generates the importance of self-reflection and the idea of agency. The dominant people maintain the 'concept of agency' and it creates the identification of belief, desires, values and practices to move individual to action; it depends on individual psychology, to treat one's life as a worker of creation. The agency can adopt belief in general exercise of his reason and it can challenge social rules through their behavior and face the structural historical power. Bujhna conducts meetings of *kamaiyas* and he addresses them that they all would be careful to be free from bonded labor. They would manage effective movement against of landlords who have kept the authority to dominate them as *kamaiyas* in the society. He further deals that the time has changed and the state has given the equal right to everyone but landlords have not

accepted it. When they become united, they would be free (36). Chatkaluwa creates his position higher and he shows autonomy which is connected with the historical practices. Although he remains individual, he conducts the social circumstance. But Bujhna creates the self-importance of self-reflection, the idea of agency. He creates self-belief, value, desire and practices to move forward against the social historical practices. He challenges the previous social concepts and deals other *kamaiyas* that they work from early morning to late evening but landlords never understand the value of their work. They do not give the proper salary. According to the Act of Law, they should get extra salary when they do work more than eight hours in a day. They do nearly about eighteen hours in a day but they get low salary. The landlords never think about extra salary. They always scold and threaten them inhumanly but they always remain silent. So, they are oppressed politically, socially and financially. They do not have space in their own society. They should try to take the place for themselves and should face against of the social traditional concept. Then, he states that they should oppose against of landlords being united. When they start to be united, landlords may threat them. But they should be united anyhow (36). The structural account of autonomy has created different position: high and low. When they oppose landlords, they may threaten the lower status people. Bujhna makes clear other *kamaiyas* that when they stand against of landlords, they may have many problems but they should be ready to face every problem by being united. Therefore, Bujhna creates his space as agency in the society to make free own self and other *kamaiyas* from bonded life.

Bujhna's resistance is not only related with the present economic pressure but it is connected with the past experience. Power is the ability of one entity to influence another's entity. It is a total structure of action which does not act directly

and immediately on others but it is exercised by agents. Then, the power of agent influences others. The power is webbed with relationship. Man captures or seizes or shares the power as being agent in the society. The power constrains action and it acts blindly to others. Resistance is analyzed commonly at the point of ruptured, tension and with source to the historical condition that makes present modes of resistance possible. Foucault's notion of power is prefaced on the belief that where there is no possibility of resistance, there is no relation of power. The power exercise carries on at risk form on cooperative of its subject: it always demands sacrifices and its outcome remains far from certain. Resistance produces refinement or modification of techniques of power. Resistance is the 'counter-stroke' to power. Power and resistance remain together and they govern the mechanism of social activities. Resistance is not related with only the present power relationship but it is connected with the past experience of domination, as David A. Nicholls argues, "Resistance may assume a relationship not only to be the present exercise of power but also two events that have framed one's subjectivity in the past"(47). Resistance becomes related with the past social practices and it brings change in the present time. Nageshwar and his wife work at Chatkaluwa's house as bonded laborer. They work from early morning to late night. He works in the field and his wife as domestic worker but they never get actual payment. They have economic problem and it makes them bonded laborer. Chatkaluwa performs the structural action and the power enforces to accept the punishment, the categories of punishment for man and women become different. Power consists not only the state but local landlords constitute it through the way of welfare and they emerge the issue of economic problem. It leads Nageshwar's wife to sexual harassment as domestic sexual worker. She feels that she has been under the cruel behavior of the landlord but she cannot speak against of the exploitation, sexual

harassment and inhuman nature of Chatkaluwa. He tries to rape Nageshwar's wife in front of her husband. Nageshwar cannot bear the behavior of him and he tries to object it. But Chatkaluwa hits on her breast; she becomes unconscious and dies there. Kopila critiques that Chatkaluwa beats Nageshwar again and again by stick and kills him there. He hangs their body on a tree (31). All the villagers have known about the event but no one speaks against Chatkaluwa because he has captured the power and he acts everything blindly. Bujhna has seen the event personally because he also works in Chatkaluwa's house as *kamaiya*. He also becomes silent in the time but later, he decides to resist against the cruel behavior of the landlord. He gathers and conducts meetings with other *kamaiyas*. On one hand, he makes the plan to revolt against the landlord with other *kamaiyas* and on the other hand, he encourages his son, Dukhawa that they have economic problem but they would live Chatkaluwa's house by 'January' (8) because he has been tired working at his house. The landlord never feels his suffering. He cannot leave his house just in the time because he has borrowed money in "Dashain" and has not returned the debt. By managing the loan, he has the plan to leave his house. So, Bujhna's resistance is not only related with the present event but it becomes related with the past behavior of his landlord.

Bujhna takes the horizontal way of movement against the landlord. Subaltern people are out of the main stream. They are oppressed group, inferior rank and have no position in the society. It means that they have no identity and cannot speak against the elite group. Bondage Tharus remain in the subaltern group and they have no existence in their community. Because of being bonded laborer, they have no recognition in the society and they have to follow the decision of landlords. Nepal is republic country but bondage Tharu has no equal right as other elite caste. They have to do struggle for their freedom because other caste cannot understand the value of

their struggle. They may become biased and blame them; backward and uneducated. The feudal group treats them as 'others' because *kamaiyas* depend on landlords. Political leaders have used and misused them during the time of democratic movement and money lenders may help them when they accept their decisions. Other different groups have used them only to gain the power. Then, they themselves have to struggle against landlords but their struggle must be horizontal rather than vertical. Top to bottom struggle mechanism is not possible for *kamaiyas* because it becomes destructive and elite group may divide them into many groups such as men and women and east and west, etc. The ruler may convince by giving proper space to Tharu leaders. When the leaders escape from the field, they do not have chain of command. So, they have to come out horizontally to resist for their freedom, as Partha Chatterjee advocates that resistance is more important or truer than domination (9).

Tharus need to resist by taking proper way and it may be more difficult than domination. Bujhna calls all bonded laborers for meeting at the first time. He addresses all men and women that they work at landlords' house. There is no involvement of any elite caste as well as Tharu elite leaders but they all are from *kamaiya's* background. He concludes that they work up to midnight but their work is not valued. According to the law, everyone has to do eight hours and if anyone works more than eight hours, they should be given extra salary but they work eighteen hours in a day. When they do not speak, the landlords only use them for working (36).

Bujhna never follows the way of Tharu leaders but he tries to manage the horizontal struggle by gathering all *kamaiyas*. They all have same types of experiences and troubles. He makes conscious them that they may have more problem during the struggle time than bondage life had. He advocates them that they would move forwards being united; they would discuss themselves, how to handle the movement

and what they would demand with landlords. In the leadership of him, all *kamaiyas* discuss to make effective struggle against of landlords. They all involve in discussion. They do not have any hierarchy among themselves. They express their idea openly. They understand each other's problems clearly because they are from same background. One of them, Janjirawa explains that no one gives right easily and they should capture the authority of them. They need to be united and would go forwards (37). He emphasizes that they can achieve equal right through the struggle and they should be united. Bujhna convinces the mass that they have to handle everything seriously and properly. They should make the plan how to do the struggle. Dukhawa, son of Bujhna becomes encouraged and he further adds, "The state has given us equal right as landlords. So, we have to use the right properly otherwise, landlords dominate us forever"(33). He becomes aware towards their authority. When they drive the movement effectively, they would be free from bondage life, or else they would have the same position as the past. Therefore, taking chain of command from the same ground level, Bujhna becomes successful to lead the movement against landlords in his community.

*Kamaiyas* get up against of the ill treatment of *zamindar* even in democratic phase. Tharus have no land because they have already lost their land. They feel that they have been cheated or exploited. Then, they have been spending their life as *kamaiya*. The historical inequality has been grounded in and structured by the law of the state in among different ethnic groups in Nepal, as Arjun Guneratne surveys that the 'structural inequality' cannot be eliminated by simple fact: the structure itself must be dismantled and the relations among the various component of social regenerated. The 'problem of *kamaiya*' has been highlighted by the government in 1990, during the restoration time of democracy but the 'structural inequality' in Tharu community



becomes extreme and Tharu labors have been bonded to service the elite caste's landlords in west Terai. Then, Tharu activists manage the struggle against of *kamaiya* system again and again but they do not get any achievement because they are not from *kamaiya* background. The NGO named 'Backward Society Education' (BASE) also struggles for many years against of existing structural power but 'bureaucrats' becomes indifference and the government shows lack of interest in the issue. Later, NGO advocates to impose the group presentation but the nation communicates in with clumsy grace and it takes no moment to give either land or subsistence to the *kamaiyas* and Guneratne criticizes, "While the government's hand on the *kamaiya* issue was eventually forced by NGO activists and mass demonstration, the state gave with poor grace, and took no step to provide either land or livelihood to the *kamaiya* following their emancipation" (26). So, *kamaiyas* themselves manage all activities in their own community. They realize that they would involve in the movement to get equal right in the society. They become responsive and start to drive the movement to become free from bondage life. Bujhna performs his activities to inspire other *kamaiyas* and his son, Dukhawa always supports Bujhna and Dukhawa stimulates his father not to be worry. They should unite all *kamaiyas*. If they become united, landlords will return to their own common place (34). He believes that when they become united, they can get mastery which the state has announced. Janjirawa describes in *kamaiya's* meeting that their struggle is for their right. No other man manages the strike for their right. When anyone or any organization creates movement, it would not be effective and he further adds, "No one comes to give our supremacy. We should demand for our authority. We should be united and do hard work while searching our sovereignty" (37). Without being united or not doing hard work, they would not get freedom from bondage life. Although they have painful life,

they have to be united and stand against of landlord's exploitation. They all promise to walk in new path of life by doing the struggle and being united in their own community. So, *kamaiyas* oneself become ready to hold strikes against persecution in their society.

Bujhna creates mass demonstration for *kamaiya's* right in the street. The various national and international organizations: BASE, INSEC, RRN, UNICEF, Save the Children, etc. which have organized different programs against *kamaiya* system in Terai of Nepal. The NGOs: BASE and INSEC have led the way in developing comprehensive programs to address *kamaiya's* problem. BASE has coined the phrase 'Education for Transformation' and while from beginning, INSEC has conducted both human right's awareness and organizing people as components of its literary classes. BASE takes two paths: first, Tharus have been bonded laborer because of their lack of education and educational program should be made effective in their community and second, Tharus should strike against of the system in their locality, as Adam Robertson and Shisham Mishra synthesize, "In 1987, BASE organized a strike in two villages in Dang district: chaukura and Baibung. The strike started in *Maghi* but lasted only one month, because the *kamaiya* involved were beginning to strive" (64). *Kamaiyas* have been motivated to come out against of *kamaiya* system but because of their poverty, they could not operate the movement for long time and the agency of Tharu community has not taken the place. They do not have proper unity to strive. *Kamaiyas* feel that the battle would be controlled by the agency of *kamaiya* and it can guide everyone properly. They start to search the agency from their own community so that their strike would reach to the final to give the authority to *kamaiyas*. So, *kamaiyas* gather and discuss about the bonded system. Bujhna explains that the time has changed. The state has given equal right to everyone

and they have to do the work only for eight hours. When they do work more than eight hours, they should be given additional payment for extra hours. When they become silent, they would not get any right and when they do strike being united against of the exploitation, they would get authority surely. The landlords would not provide any goodness to them if they do not do any struggle. He takes advices of all *kamaiyas* and makes the plan how to move forward. Janjirawa accepts Bujhna's view and he expresses that no one comes to give any virtue when they do not demand. They should search their right own self. All men and women become ready to do the struggle and they discuss how to make the plan. They decide that first they would get right and then, they would do work, as Kopila telescopes that *kamaiyas* struggle against landlord in Nuklipur village in the leadership of Bujhna. The landlords become afraid in the village. Bujhna always becomes busy to inspire other *kamaiyas* against of landlords from morning to evening (37). Bujhna gathers all *kamaiyas* in Nuklipur and they show mass demonstration against of *zamindars*. The *zamindars* become afraid with *kamaiya's* movement. Therefore, Bujhna manages street demonstration by gathering all *kamaiyas* for their own right.

Bujhna's leadership helps other *kamaiyas* to avoid their poverty. *Kamaiya* system remained alive openly until 2000, before the declaration of *kamaiya* freedom by the cabinet of Nepalese government on July 17, 2000. Then after, the bonded system became illegal. Although they became free legally, they were not free from the poverty. They had the problem of shelter, food, medicine, education, etc. When they would leave landlords, they would not have any way for livelihood and if they remain there, they would be bonded forever. On one hand, they managed the horizontal movement in the leadership of *kamaiya* to uplift their life and on the other hand, they take different types of trainings. Then, when they leave landlord's house and they can

do different occupations as carpentry, riding rickshaw, poultry farm, vegetable farming. Different NGOs and the government have managed different schemes to develop their skill, employment and adventurous activities. They start their work from farming to daily wages labor and off-farming activities (skill labor and business). They become interested to income generating activities. They focus on off-farm based skill development, employment and enterprises (small and medium sized micro-plan of action) as Buddhi Ram Chaudhary synthesizes that "various type of trainings" have been provided to *ex-kamaiyas* and their families (103). Thus, Tharu's movement against of the bonded laborer system becomes very effective to make alert towards the off-farm based skill development. The agency, in their community from same ground, helps to uplift their thought. Bujhna and his family members work in Chatkaluwa's house as *kamaiya* for many years. But he shows courage to leave Chatkaluwa's house. Kopila observes that Bujhna starts to work in town and his wife, Dukhaniya becomes busy in her housework. Chatkaluwa comes to call Bujhna again and again but he does not response him (43). Bujhna challenges the previous structural power and he never cares it. He always becomes careful to tackle the problems and makes awake other *kamaiyas*, as he says, "Landlords will not find any *kamaiya* and *kamlari* when we become careful" (45). He makes aware others that they have to know how and what they have been doing work. Dukhawa is ill and he cannot do any physical work but he always lights a fire to his father that he would not be worried about the villagers and Dukhawa himself makes united the villagers to oppose against landlords (34). Dukhawa always supports Bujhna and he advices him to make united the villagers to revolt against of *zamindars*. They should uplift *kamaiyas* to work freely according to their skill and interest. Bhebhawa and Sikhawa are *kamaiyas* as Bujhna at Chatkaluwa's house. Bujhna leads them to leave Chatkaluwa's house and they reject to

remain *kamaiya* in the future, as Kopila states that Bhebhawa buys rickshaw and Sikhawa does labor in the town. They do hard work during the day but they have happy life. Other *kamaiyas* have been busy to develop their skill (41). So, all *kamaiyas* have been free from bondage life and they become busy in their own work in the leadership of Bujhna. Then, they have been employed in their own place. Bhebhawa and Sikhawa start to save four or five hundred rupees per day. Therefore, being agency, Bujhna becomes successful to create opportunities to himself and other *kamaiyas* for earning cash day by day.

Bujhna takes the way of resistance not caring the structural power. Socio-historical structure creates the power and person applies as the personal power although everyone has equal space in the society. Person may have weaknesses but cultural practices encourage them to dominate others such as the patriarchal culture creates boundary between man and woman; men become superior over women and men use women as the sexual instrument and bourgeois to proletariat as labor although they have same status in the society. Power relationships are not harmonious but they always procreate new form of culture and subjectivity, a new opening for potential resistance to emerge. Resistance is technical ingredient of administration and the ingredient involves in the fact that administration is always subject to politics. Resistance is the part of fact that power can only ever make social machinery run unsoundly. Resistance creates the disagreement; the goal of resistance is some sort of change and it provokes redescription of social structures and ideologies. Power incorporates a 'degree of freedom' that always for the possibility for resistance. Resistance to power grabs from within the power and it is the part of the total relations of power, as David A. Nicholls argues, "Where there is possibility of resistance, there can be no relation of power" (46). The resistance does not accept the

power. Power becomes active in own field but resistance always stands against of it. During the resistance period, people never care the power. They neglect the power of authority. They, who are on the way of resistance, always encourage the mass to revolt against of the authority. They abandon the structural power. On one hand, Bujhna and other *kamaiyas* are against of Chatkaluwa's inhumane behavior and on the other hand, Chatkaluwa is killed by terrorist because he always dominates *kamaiyas*. They feel relief on the death of the landlord because he is the murderer of Nageshwar, his wife and Sempatiya. He has raped and killed other poor women. No one can oppose his work. By the time, other landlords leave the village and start to live in town. They suspect Bujhna and put a case against of him in police station although he does not have any involvement in the murdering case. Bujhna, being agency, falls in trouble. All *kamaiyas* gather and discuss about their future. Bujhna leads and guides them. He always motivates them that the policemen may come and would give torture to everyone in the village. After Chatkaluwa's death, policemen come to the village to investigate about the case and they ask *kamaiyas* one by one. Bujhna advices them that no onewould feel afraid but they should be careful (45). He disagrees the structural power. The structural authority remains active in its field but Bujhna resists the power and he consoles other *kamaiyas* that power may try to keep them in trap. But they would not feel any afraid. They would do everything carefully. Thus, Bujhna never cares the power but he always takes the path of resistance.

The local landlords create the situation to kill the agency to make Tharu's movement feeble. Tharu's consciousness becomes a contradictory unit of two aspects: in one, they are inferior, where they accept the immediate reality of power relations that dominate and exploit them and on the other, they deny the condition of subordination and asserts their autonomy because the community is the space where

the contradictory unit of Tharu consciousness makes it emergence. The history of Tharu struggle is the form of history of them as active and conscious subject. Their experience of varying forms of subordination and of resistance, their attempt to manage with changing forms of materials and ideological life, both in their everyday experiences and in those flashes of open rebellion, most leave their impression on consciousness as a purifying of learning and development, Tharus are in open rebellion which gives them a sighting of that influenced area in their consciousness. It permits them to see the everyday and extraordinary as part of a single unity and Partha Chatterjee explains, "... the dominant view has been ... a framework for harmonizing the mutual interdependence of separate groups through the inculcation of a set of shared value about the unity of the system as a whole" (13). The separate group has own social relationship and no one can resist suddenly. Bujhna remains *kamaiya* because of his economic problem and he encourages all *kamaiyas* that they should revolt against of landlord's exploitation. When he is talking and making plans with other *kamaiyas* against of landlords that how they can do strikes in the future, one jeep, with 10-12 policemen, comes and they get off in front of his house. They arrest and keep him in the jeep but other *kamaiyas* run away. Kopila observes that Bujhna also tries to escape but he cannot because he has been caught by 5-6 policemen. He cries with fear but the policemen laugh at. They kick him unkindly. They threaten him that they would shoot if he tries to run away and he is taken to the police station. As agency, Bujhna has been managing everything to rebel against of the sicken nature of landlords and he tries to make other *kamaiyas* aware in the village. Although he has no involvement in murdering case of Chatkaluwa, he is arrested. He denies the domination and exploitation of them. He remains in open rebellion which develops the consciousness to *kamaiyas* purifying

of learning and development. But he belongs to oppressed group and he has no space in the society. Tharus have no recognition and they have to follow the decisions of landlords. They are behaved as 'others'. Bujhnais not accepted by the local landlords and he is kept in isolation by taking the support of administration. Therefore, Bujhna is made separate from the society to disconnect Tharu's rebellion which directly affects the local feudalism.

The landlords swipe away Bujhna, the agency of *kamaiya*. The goal of resistance is some sort of change and it produces re-explanation of the social construction. Different people have different beliefs and they explain everything from their own side. It depends on the person and the individual becomes the vehicle of power. The self-investigation generates the role of formation. *Kamaiyas* feel that they are dominated by the structural power of landlord and they have remained under the exploitation; physically, economically and politically. They do not have self-existence and have no free life. So, they create self-belief, value, desire and practice to move forward against of the socio-historical practices. Agency in Tharu community becomes active to remove brutality of *zamindar* but the local landlords have created the political authority and they exercise the politics as power. It is found as adventitious level whose objects are attached with other relations that appear as force to all kinds of institutions, as Torben Bech Dyrberg judges, "They make up a substantial part of the domain of politics as they play a key role in governing individual and population" (273). They create meaningful empire of the politics and play the vital role for controlling the individual. There is politics in every organization and they are used by the political authority. The local landlords use power to dominate *kamaiyas*. They have set of strong connection in the society and they take part in making network inclusiveness of power relations. Although Bujhna has no



involvement in the murdering case of Chatkaluwa, he is arrested from the group of *kamaiyas* and taken to the police station. The administrative institution remains controlled by the local feudal and the local authority cannot accept the agency in Tharu community because it creates much more difficulties in their life. So, keeping relationship with landlords, the administration controls the individual. Thus, Bujhna is killed in *Karri* public forest as Kopila mentions that one terrorist named Bujhna has been killed in fighting between policemen and armed terrorist and one SLR gun, 5 socket bombs and other documents have been found with him(50). In this way, on one hand, the agency of *kamaiya*, Bujhna is killed by using power and on the other hand, Bujhna's son, Dukhawa's health has been being poor and poor. When he listens the news of his father's death, he cries "father" and dies there. Landlord with the connection of administration does the politics and they add more suffering instead of helping Dukhawa. It leads him to die. Dukhaniya, the wife of Bujhna also knows the death of her husband and son and she cannot bear the message. She weeps heavily. She becomes unconscious and dies there. Bujhna desires some sort of changing in the society that he is on the way of freedom of *kamaiya* and he generates the role of agency in *kamaiya*'s community. But the local landlords make the political setting with administration and they make clear their obstacles and then they make plan to kill Bujhna. Therefore, the local landlord uses political power to demolish the agency forever which tries to obstacle their authority.

Tharus become *kamaiya* because of the faulty policy of the state and they come out from the subjugation of organizational brutality. Tharu's indigenous place becomes captured by local landlords; the hill people who have migrated to Terai and the agents of rulers as the tax collector. It disadvantages Tharus and they become landless. They collect loan for buying daily necessary things with compound interest

rate. They cannot return it in time and become bonded laborer. Because of their loan, they become *kamaiya* generation to generation. When they work as bonded laborer; men work physically in the field and women as domestic worker. They have to do work according to landlord's desire. They always remain under the discrimination and have to face physical domination as well as sexual torture. Nageshwar and his wife are bonded laborer at Chatkaluwa's house. Chatkaluwa tries to rape her openly in front of Nageshwar. He cannot bear it and tries to oppose but they both are killed and they are hanged on a tree. Sempatiya, the daughter of Nageshwar is also killed brutally in the raping case. She is also hanged on a tree. Chatkaluwa settles the cases easily by taking the support of administration. He always feels proud and walks openly in the village. Bujhna and his members work as *kamaiyas* at his house. He only demands their work every time. Bujhna cannot care his son when he is seriously ill. Chatkaluwa always threatens *kamaiyas* and they have no free life. They remain bonded laborer generation to generation. Different organizations try to make Tharus free from bondage life and they manage different strikes against of the structural domination again and again but they do not become successful because they cannot involve *kamaiyas* for long time. It makes clear that while avoiding the exploitation of any group, the agency from the same community should come out to hold the strikes. So, Bujhna plays the role of agency to avoid injustice of *kamaiyas*. He gathers all *kamaiyas* and conducts meetings again and again. He pilots everyone to drive the struggle and to gain goodness in their life. Being encouraged, all *kamaiyas* challenge the earlier constructional power through the gatherings and street exhibition. They do not oppose only the present domination but they mention even the past events. They become empowered by Bujhna's proposition. His activities help other *kamaiyas* to be free but old systemic organization cannot accept his activities and he is kept in entrap.

He is killed in fake case by blaming his participation in assassination of Chatkaluwa although he has no involvement in the case. The previous structural power tries to break the chain of agency with other common people. Thus, sacrificing his life, Bujhna makes all *kamaiyas* free.

### **Rescuing Self: Agency in *Lal Kerani***

Bonded laborer plays the role of agency to rescue own self and others in Tharu community. Landlords perform the power in different structures and *kamaiyas* face inhuman, brutal and cruel behavior because of their poverty. They bargain with poor Tharus that they would provide their land for *adhiyabatiya* when they send their daughter as *kamlari*. Different organizations manage different striking movements against of *kamaiya* system but they become failure because of the lack of Tharu agency. Later, *kamaiyas* keep the involvement of them against of the system and they pick up *their life* to goodness. Thus, this paper makes an attempt to explore about rescuing self in Krishna Raj Sharbahari's *Lal Kerani* (2017). Parents send their daughter as *kamlari* because of their poverty. On one hand, they think that they would get good food, clothes and education in the landlord's house and on the other hand, landlords bargain with poor Tharus that if they accept to plough their land for *adhiyabatiya*, they have to send their daughter as *kamlari*. Then, they face discrimination, sexual harassment, oppression, etc. in landlord's house. They have to be busy in housework activities: cleaning clothes, cooking meal, making tea, cutting grass, etc. Landlords never send them to their parent's house even in festivals and relative's marriage ceremony. Landlord's members show brutal behavior: scolding, beating and controlling to *kamaiya*. *Kamlaris* never get chance to go to school for education. Yet NGOs create different strikes against *kamaiya* system, they become failure because there is no involvement of *kamaiya*. So, *kamaiyas* create the situation of different

movements from their community. They do not stop the movement before they become free. Ex-*kamaiyas* regularly give speech and demonstrate street dramas to threaten landlords who have kept bonded laborer in their house and the parents who have sent their children as the bonded laborer. They play the effective role to make all bonded laborers liberate. Therefore, being agency, Tharus play the vital role to rescue own self and other bonded laborers for their recognition in their society.

After the restoration of democracy (1990), Nepali people have become liberate but Tharus had to spend bondage life up to 2000 and they did not have liberty. They became liberate legally in 2000 but they faced unbearable pain because of the economic trouble after their freedom. Power includes not only the state but local aristocrats forcefully perform upon poor Tharus and it guides them to sexual persecution; men work in the field and women as domestic sexual trader. They cannot react against of ill treatment, sexual harassment and cruel behavior. Lal Bahadur Kshetri bargains with Maghuram that if he wants plough the land for share crop, he has to send his daughter, Goharaki as *kamlari* where he sends her to his relative's house. Maghuram negotiates with him and he sends her as *kamlari* although she wishes to study. Kshetri pretends that she would get chance to study and would have happy life because she would get food, clothes and education there but she faces pitiable situation. She eats food what they have left and have to work from early morning to late evening. When she desires to go to school, *malikni* beats her by the stick. She overlooks sexual harassment and is not allowed to return to her parents' house even in festival and her relative's marriage ceremony. Seeing daughter's poor condition, Maghuram feels terrible and he becomes connected with NGO's programs: BASE's non-formal education and INSEC's human right authority. He becomes courageous to protest the previous structural domination. He takes support of FNC

and makes Goharaki liberate from *kamlari*. When she becomes free, on one hand she studies as well as teaches in school and becomes self dependent and on the other hand, she becomes busy to demonstrate *sadak natak* (street drama), stories related with *kamlari* and their pain in landlord's house. She threatens landlords who have kept *kamlaris* in their house and parents who have sent their daughter as *kamlari* through the street drama. She creates the environment to release other *kamlaris*. Maghuram works effectively being the President of *Kamlari Mukta Morcha* to liberate bonded *kamlari*. They perform effective activities to break the structural domination. So, both of them become successful to declare *kamlaris* free in their society.

Maghuram accepts to send Goharaki where Lal Bahadur Kshetri sends her as *kamlari*. Tharus are natural friendly and they always respect the nature. They do not have other occupations for earning their life. They depend on the land. They believe that the land has been made by their first deity, *Gurubaba* and the deity has gifted the land to them. Therefore, they never expand the nation of private ownership of land and believe it to be common property. During Rana and Shah Regime, Tharus were replaced by hill migrant people because they were granted Terai land as *birta* and *Jagir*. The hill based people became landlord and they became the local mediators of peasants and rules as the tax collector. The landlords were strenuous in Terai region where as *talukdar* in the hill area of Nepal. So, *zamindar* and *talukdar* operated the negotiator between individual land owner and the office revenue collection.

*Zamindars* had also property right and they could use free laborer for farming work in their *praganna* or *mauja*. Being landless, Tharus became bonded laborer in agriculture sector in Terai and *kamaiya* system was systematized with the compulsory laborer, called *Jhara*. They did not have any other sources of income and they agreed to work for the employer for long period in exchange for a loan in kin or in cash. It

became impossible to return the loan back due to high interest rate or fraud paper adding additional zero in the loan agreement paper. Therefore, they worked as *kamaiya* in the landlord's house. When Tharus want to plough *zamindar's* land for *adhiya batiya* they have to send their daughter as *kamlari* where the landlord takes them. Buddhi Ram Chaudhary synthesizes that daughters are sold and bonded. They have to work excessive hours in isolated place at night, as he further states, "This makes the condition of *kamlari* worse and sometime involves physical violence and sexual abuse". (61) *Kamlaris* do not have personal free life. Being landless, Maghuram ploughs the land of Kshetri for *adhiya batiya* and they divide the crop equally. He cannot manage the food for his family when Kshetri rejects him to plough the land. So, Kshetri bargains with him that when he agrees to send his daughter as *kamlari*, he would provide the land to plough. Otherwise, he would not give the land to plough (9). He gives pressure to Maghuram to send his daughter as *kamlari* where he sends her. If he agrees to send his daughter, he would add one *bigha* (nearly 1.5 hector) land to plough and his daughter would get food and clothes there. Maghuram falls in trouble that on one hand, he does not have any way to earn money and on the other hand, Kshetri would not provide any land to plough. Though he has been very sad, he accepts to send his daughter as *kamlari*. So, because of being landless, Maghuram accepts to send his daughter Goharaki with Kshetri as *kamlari*.

Goharaki is affected by the poverty of her father. In Terai, Tharus are landless and they do not have other occupation for earning money. Because of their poverty, parents sell their daughter. Although the daughter desires to study, they work as bonded laborer. Being *kamlari*, they have to serve landlord. They have to work every time from early morning to late evening. Although they work hard, they have to face humiliation, exploitation, injustice, discrimination, oppression and inequality. Being

*kamaiya*, Tharus work in farm and they face physical difficulties but women face the mental torture and physical burdensome being *kamlari*. They have to face sexual harassment at landlord's house. It is connected with the issue of body in term of both feminine and masculine that woman is sexually treated as object of pleasure while men work hard in the field. The local feudal exercises power over Tharu members and they are disadvantaged politically, economic, and cultural practices. They face barbaric condition and unfair behavior. In Tharu film named *Lawa Juni*, K.L. Pidita has created the story of Rita Chaudhary as *kamlari* to whom her parents sell as bonded domestic laborer although she wishes to study. She is less than 14 years. She desires to study at school, as Pidita poses dialogue as this:

Daughter: Mom, I don't go as kamari. I would like to study. I don't go.

Mother: Please go. If you don't go, how we can manage food for the family because we are poor.

Parents sell their daughter as *kamlari* because they manage food by sending their daughter as *kamlari* although they impulse to study. The parents have economic pressure and landlords bargain with them to send their daughter as *kamlari* before providing the land to plough *adhiya batiya*. Goharaki studies in class two in a night school because she becomes busy to cut grass, to look after cattle and other housework activities in the day. But she desires to go to school in day time and she explains, "I would like study in day school, Mother" (10). She cannot fulfill her desire because of the economic problem. Maghuram ploughs the land of Lal Bahadur Kshetri for *adhiya batiya* and he bargains with Maghuram that if he sends Goharaki as *kamlari*, he would allow Maghuram to plough his land. He falls in trouble and requests Kshetri, "She would get chance to study there because she has been studying here" (11). He falls in dilemma that when he sends his daughter as *kamlari*, she may

damage her desire of studying and if he does not send her, he would not get the land to plough for *adhiya batiya*. Kshetri exercises power over Maghuram. He cannot do what he desires because of his poverty. Goharaki has to follow her father's decision. On one hand, she has to bear the oppression of landlord and on the other hand, she has to follow her father's desire to manage their poverty. Although she desires to study, she has to go as *kamlari* after Kshetri. So, Goharaki becomes doubly marginalized at her own house.

The economic problem forces Maghuram to make Goharaki a *kamlari*. Before 1950, elite caste did not use the land of Terai but after the eradication of malaria, slowly and gradually they captured it in the name of *birta* and *jagir*. On one hand, Tharus had burden of paying the tax of land and on the other hand, they started to take the debt for buying medicine, clothes etc. from elite caste by giving their *lalpurja*. Then, they captured Tharu's land. In the way, Tharus became landless and they started to work as bonded laborer, men in the farm and women as domestic worker. They had to do the work what *zamindars* ordered and they remained silent. The unmarried girls had to go to *zamindar's* house by leaving their parents' house in their child age. Robertson and Mishra observe, "Young unmarried girls aged between eight and sixteen are sometime taken to work exclusively in their landlord's house and are referred to as *argoniya* in the *kamlari* system" (24). Because of the economic crisis, the parents send the young girl to landlord's house as *kamlari*. Landlords bargain with them by keeping them in the trap. Although the young ladies like to study, no one listens their voices. Lal Bahadur Kshetri keeps Maghuram in trap that if he accepts to send Goharaki as *kamlari* in his relative's house, he would provide his land to plough. Otherwise, he would reject to give the land. He enforces him to send her as *kamlari* although she desires to study in school. Further, he explains, "your daughter will live



happily there and there is school where she can study nearby" (11). But when she goes there, she has to be busy in housework from early morning to late evening. *Malikni* beats her when she desires to go to school. She cannot weep in front of *malikni even*. She feels pain on her leg and weeps catching her leg on the bed in the night. She further argues, "I have no pen and copy to write letter.... I eat what the members of master leave. Some time, I eat without vegetable. All members giggle and say how much *Tharuni* eats when I am eating (27). She has to do hard work from morning to evening. She does not have any chance to go to school. She does not have enough food to fulfill her stomach. She has unbearable situation and she is not behaved as human being but Maghuram sends her as *kamlari*. Thus, the economic problem never forgives and Maghuram sends Goharaki to other's house as *kamlari*.

Landlords say one thing but they behave *kamaiyas* differently. They make fake paper. *Kamaiyas* pay and pay the compound interest but they cannot reduce the debt. Then, landlords calculate and they register *kamaiyas'* whole property in her family member's name. Some time, they lure Tharus making different plan which they have made to uplift the *kamaiya's* life. They explain their plan detailly and convince *kamaiyas*. They believe that they would have bright future. *Zamindars* conduct different meetings in the village and they take signature and finger prints of Tharus on the blank paper. Being excited, they mark their signature and finger prints on the paper. But taking group signatures, landlords register Tharus' land in their own name. When Tharus start to collect harvesting, landlords reach to the farm and they dictate them to divide garner equally with them because they have only the authority upon the land. In *Muktik Khoj*, Chhibilal Kopila has mentioned that *zamindar*, Phaniram Neupane conducts a meeting gathering all Tharus and he persuades them to establish a school in their village. They hold up his idea. He motivates them that they

all need to sign on the paper so that the paper will help him to follow the educational office. Then, they sign on the blank paper and hand over it to him. However, he registers their land in his own name by taking support of the paper. Two months later, he challenges them, "You have to divide paddy because the land belongs to me" (5). He says one thing but he does other thing. Lal Bahadur Kshetri always lures Maghuram showing different plans which would help him and his family. Maghuram expresses that he has done right work by sending his daughter Goharaki as *kamlari* because he has got three thousand rupees which would help for the marriage of his sister, Santoli and he will get remaining two thousand rupees later because landlord has bought his daughter in five thousand rupees for one year (23). Kshetri deals that Goharaki would not have any difficulties at *malik's* house but she faces inhuman behavior there. He further states, "Your daughter will get food, clothes and some money when she will work there" (9). He flatters him that he is social worker and maintains good environments for poor people, as he adds, "Your daughter will stay happily there (11). He convinces Maghuram that he will request his relative Bodhi lawyer to send Goharaki to school and he will get more land to plough. So, he and his members will have good future. Maghuram believes and supports his idea. However, he and his members' life never move smoothly. Goharaki gets suffering and she never gets chance to go to school, as she writes a letter to her parents that she has to be busy in housework activities every time and she adds that When she desires to go to school, *malikni* beats her with stick. She feels pain and weeps catching her leg on the bed in the night (27). She faces suffering, pain and difficulties there. She is not allowed to return to her house even in festival time. She works up to late night in the isolated area. No one understands her pain but everyone gives torture to her there. Kshetri has

explained one thing but she gets totally different thing there. Therefore, landlords persuade Tharus saying one thing but they find different things practically.

Maghuram and Goharaki have different space than Lal Bahadur Kshetri occupies in the society. Theory of body politics addresses the relationship between power and knowledge and how they are used as a form of social control through societal institutions. It is hugely influential in scoping understanding of power, leading away from the analysis of structures in which those actors operate, towards idea that power is everywhere "diffused" and "embodied" in discourse, knowledge and regimes of truth. Power is constituted through accepted form of knowledge, scientific understanding and truth. Structural domination is connected with power relationship which includes and excludes people in the policy. Conner Chivone Spinks discusses that [b]odies occupy spaces in the society and the spaces are given according to the "institution" and "system" that are put in place by the large social community (26). Everyone has no equal space in the society but institution and the system of the state provide the place to everyone and they are behaved differently. After the restoration of democracy (1990), the Vice-President of Village Development Committee, Lal Bahadur Kshetri sells his land to Chetkant Chaudhary. Chaudhary pays all money to Kshetri but "Kshetri has no eagerness to register the land in Chaudhary's name" (8). Kshetri pretends that Chaudhary has threatened him to kill and he forwards a case in the court. Chaudhary falls in two troubles: the first, he has no authority of the land and the second, he has problem of facing case in the court. Kshetri is very clever in court case because he has good connection with authority of the court and leaders. He can make setting from the state to local power. Kshetri always feels proud and he deals Maghuram that he has helped him financially for investing money for his sister, Santoli's marriage ceremony by managing Goharaki as

*kamlari* (82). He has no repentance of making bonded laborer to Goharaki in her child age. But he questions Maghuram how he would manage financially to his sister's marriage ceremony when his daughter does not have income. After their agreement, Maghuram makes journey to send his daughter to bus station. He has become sad and realizes that his daughter's bag, with a couple of clothes, is heavy. He fills his eyes with tears and cannot reach to the bus station. When he tries to return from mid way of the bus station, Goharaki has already filled her eyes with tears when she greets him and she asks herself, "Why do parents not ask any question to Kshetri and why they send her to other's house although she disagrees to be *kamlari*?" (11). They cannot express any word each other. They only walk just behind of Kshetri. They feel emotional grief but Kshetri feels proud taking a child as *kamlari* to his relative's house. He never understands their feeling and how they have been sad because everyone is given space according to the institution and system in the society. Therefore, Maghuram and Goharaki cannot occupy the space which Kshetri takes place in the society.

Goharaki faces inhuman behavior in master's house. The idea of man and woman is polarized to the emotion and sense. Man is mind and he represents nature: rational, unified, etc. but woman is feeble, passive, literally receptacle for the desire of male, a creature driven by emotional and instinct. Man is well established and then woman's body is subjected to the scrutinizing gaze of the human science for more than man. However, Michel Foucault argues that power and specific practice gets conducted culturally and historically at the subject of economic and cultural forces in the society. The external (institution) power produces through the development of ancestry in the society and that is power which controls bodies. Body is the point of analyzing power and it is the ability of one entity to influence the action of another's

entity. Power is a total structural action and the power of agent influences others. Therefore, man being agent seizes authority in the society. So, physical body is not important and it remains stable to serve as a basic for self recognition and identity. Man and woman are to mix together different elements with masculinity and femininity but their identities are produced by body, processing certain characteristics that are taken as evidences of man and woman existence as Angela King Critiques, "By beating down upon and mastery the body punishment was also emphatic and affirmative of power" (34). Power enforces to accept the punishment and the categories of punishment for man and woman may have different. In New year festival, Goharaki's villagers dance and sing in the picnic but she does not have any chance to meet her parents, relatives and villagers because she remains for away from her house. Maghuram and his wife only remember Goharaki and he makes plan to bring his daughter although he does not have any hope. Then, he goes to Goharaki's *malik's* house and spends nearly half an hour there but he knows nothing about her. He desires to meet her but *malikni* asks "why are you waiting when I don't send your daughter with you, Maghuram?" (29). She orders him to return because he may have some work at home. She desires not to send her because he has sent his daughter as *kamlari*. He waits for a while and sees Goharaki with heavy load of grass. When she comes near of him, his eyes are filled with tears and sits on the floor. He sees her poor condition: clothes, body, work and life style. He weeps inner and becomes speechless. He only express "to stay, daughter" (30) and escapes from there because he cannot bear her condition. Therefore, Goharaki faces inhuman trouble in *malik's* house and she does not have any existence of human life.

Goharaki falls under of the brutal behavior and she cannot utter against of ill treatment and oppression of her master' family because of the financial trouble.

Power is not only the domination to weaker by strong but it expresses the productive nature of power. Power performs in different structures such as legal, administrative, economic, etc. It cannot be owned either by the state, social classes or particular individual but it has a relationship with different individuals and groups. Thus, the term power refers to the set of relation with individuals and group of individuals. The agent or institution (government) has highly complex set of power relationship which exists at every level of the social body. Power consists not only the state but the wings of the government constitute it through the way of welfare and they emerge the issue of economic problem. It leads poor people to social harassment; the male as the laborer who work in the field and the woman as domestic sexual worker. They feel that they have been under of the cruel behavior and they do not have the favor of justice. They cannot speak against of the exploitation, sexual harassment and inhuman nature. Things are explained in different ways that people mention different views to obtain different result. Michal Foucault explains that people have strict boundary with strategies because they are bounded by the part of fundamental strategies and they have no social recognition, as Foucault opines, "people have double less objection to speak of sex under the economic pressures, it creates certain code and they become silent and the strict condition"(34). The economic pressure makes them no objection to speak against of certain code of sexual harassment because they are under the strict condition of social boundary. The economic problem creates the social strategy and the local feudal keeps the workers in certain limited boundary and they have no objection against of the feudalism. Magharam sends Goharaki as *kamlari* to Bodhi lawyer's house because he has the painful economic problem. Lal Bahadur Kshetri has already explained that she would have happy life and would get opportunity to study there. But when she becomes *kamlari*, she is not allowed to return to her parents'

house in festival and her aunt's marriage ceremony. Sharbahari synthesizes that Goharaki cannot attain her aunt's marriage ceremony because she has been *kamlari*. She is not given any holiday to meet and stay with her family members (22). When she is at her master's house in "Dashain" festival, Maghuram meets her and he puts *tika* her forehead on by the next day of Dashain. He cannot speak any word for blessing. She asks why he does not bless her using any word. He answers her, "we are poor" (79). He cannot speak while putting *tika* her forehead on because of the financial problem. She faces inhuman behavior in her master's house because of the economic problem: she does hard work from early morning to late evening but she eats food without vegetables and *malikni* scolds and beats every time. She faces sexually harassment there. When she is alone with Bodhi Lawyer's son Durgan at home, he attacks her because he is attracted by her young and beautiful body. Sharbahari further criticizes that he forcefully catches her but when she tries to run away, he tears her clothes (90). She cannot take any action against of the cruel nature of master's family members. Thus, Goharaki remains under the cruel behavior and she cannot speak against of the exploitation, sexual harassment and barbarous behavior.

*Kamlari* has to be busy at master's house during the festival and relative's marriage time. They work with only little salary or without salary. They only just get meal in the house of master but they have to do all activities as kitchen work or housework activities or agricultural work. The *kamlari* system has been most serious issue and it has remained problematic in Terai of Nepal. Children act 1992 does not allow employing children less than 14 years outside their house. However, landlords keep bonded *kamlari* under 14 years. They have to work without payment. They work excessive hours with the risk of "physical violence" and "sexual harassment". They face several course of "physical and sexual abuse" verbally and physically by master's

family members. They are scolded, beaten and kept without food. They cannot return to their parents' house even in festival and traditional ceremony as relative's marriage. They are abused verbally and frequently beaten by pulling their hair. They always remain silent because no one can help them. Master's family members celebrate differently festivals and cultural ceremonies happily but *kamlaris* have to be busy in housework when they are sick. They are not behaved as human but they are behaved as material, as Buddhi Ram Chaudhary comments that *kamlaris* never get chance to return to their parents' house even in festival time and they remain busy in "working in sick condition" (123). Under age of 14 years, *kamlaris* have to do *malik's* work during the festival or other ceremonies and they never get chance to go to their parents' house to share their happiness. They face inhuman and cruel behavior of master's family. As *kamlari*, Goharaki deals her father that she does not have pen and copy to write letter. She has to do house work every time. *Malik* beats her by stick. She cannot weep in front of master's family but she weeps catching her leg in the night. She further writes, "When I am at home, I would play with my brother and would dance in *phupu's* marriage ceremony" (27). She is not allowed to return to her home even in her *phupu's* (father's sister) marriage. Then, there is marriage ceremony in her *malik's* village in the same day of her *phupu's* marriage. She also goes there with other children and spends some time there. She gets enjoy remembering her *phupu's* marriage but when she returns to her *malik's* home, *malikni* becomes very angry and scolds her cruelly. Her son beats her inhumanly. She is ordered to make tea. She weeps and "the tear drops on the tea" (27). She does not have any free time because she has to cook meal, to make tea, to look after cattle, to cut grass, etc. during the time of her *phupu's* marriage ceremony. Therefore, Goharaki has to be busy at her



*malik's* house for doing different activities even in festival and her relative's marriage ceremony time.

Aasha generates the happiest movement creating new relationship with unknown person in Dashain festival. Subaltern is the dominated group and they have no history. They cannot speak. Speaking is not crying through the loud sound but it is the transcending between speaker and listener. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak explains that the subaltern has mass but they are not united. Politics can unite the mass but they are not actual subaltern. Feminist deals about gender and Marxist covers the capitalization in domestic and civil society. The structure of exploitation is compounded by patriarchal social relation and the international division of labor. The subject of exploitation cannot know or speak the text of woman's exploitation. The subalterns are exploited in the bourgeois society. Men do work and they do not get proper salary but women are more marginalized because there is the ground rule of sexual division of labor. Bourgeois dominates workers by word and action. When women is poor or subaltern, it becomes more problematic because men and women are behaved differently and law is not effective, as Spivak reflects, "... the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow"(287). Women face more problem than men have. Being *kamlari*, Goharaki cannot meet to her family members in Dashain time because her master does not allow her to return to her house. Then, her father comes to meet her but he cannot meet her. She has to be busy at kitchen and housework activities during the festival time. Aasha has been *kamlari* the next neighbor of Goharaki's master's house. No relative comes to meet her although she feels alone in crowd of master's family. She is far away. She always remembers her family members. Her parents does not know either she is dead or alive. She weeps again and again remembering her members.

Goharaki also used to weep but she has rejected to weep because she thinks that *kamlari* does not have any relationship with family members and it is the fate of them. She convinces Aasha that they are poor *kamlaris* and they have to do other's work. It expresses how pitiable condition *kamlaris* have. Men have trouble as being poor but women have more problem and they have to face all things remaining far away from the family members. Thus, being alone in the festival period, Aasha and Goharaki forcefully make *phupu* (father sister) and *bhatiji* (brother's daughter) relationship. Being *phupu*, Goharaki puts Dashain *tika* on Aasha's forehead although they do not have any blood relationship and Sharbahari mentions, "Aasha feels that it is the happiest day after being *kamlari*" (81). Aasha makes new relationship with unknown person during festival time. Thus, creating new relationship, she celebrates the festival for making happiest day in her *kamlari* life.

Magharam makes Goharaki free from bondage life. After the restoration of multi party system (1990), Tharus have not been free from bonded laborer nearly 10 years. The arrival of democracy encourages representatives of indigenous groups and others with low status to be more vocal searching caste structures. NGOS: BASE, SWAN, FNC, etc have lead the way in developing comprehensive programs to address the problem of bonded laborer through non-formal education class to them because they have identified the higher level of illiteracy among them as a major factor of their exploitation. The illiteracy class always becomes the wider subject of empowering to help them and assent their right. BASE creates the phrase "Education for Transformation", while from the beginning, INSEC has corporated both human right awareness and arranging people as ingredient of its literacy classes. *Kamaiyas* develop awareness, group formation and human right education through the non-formal literacy programs. Robestson and Mishra synthesis, "The very real and

demonstrable effort of the NGO's activities in tackling the *kamaiya* system is one of the most significant development to have taken place in human rights fields in Nepal in recent years" (67). NGOs perform the effective activities to make *kamaiyas* liberate. They encourage *kamaiyas* to tackle every problem of them practically. On one hand, Maghuram takes training about human right and on the other hand, he takes livelihood training. So, he becomes conscious about his right although he is poor. He develops his thought through the help of NGO's programs. He chooses the way to make his daughter liberate. She can make her future only after her liberation. So, he does not have any fear of previous structural organization although he is ex-*kamaiya* and he answers to Kshetri, "When I disagree to send my daughter as *kamlari*, you may keep me in trouble not giving land for share crop. The state has declared the freedom to *kamaiya* and I do not send my daughter to other's house as *kamlari* in the situation" (82). He takes bold decision and rejects to send his daughter as *kamlari* to landlord's house. He stands against of the structural system. He takes help of NGOs to make his daughter liberate. Sharbahari states that Maghuram goes to FNC office in Lamahi because he has heard that if anyone gives an application, it helps *kamlari* to return back to their house (87). He only does not only stand against of landlords but he becomes conscious to make his daughter liberate because he is connected with NGOs which have played the vital role to make bonded laborer free. He never feels afraid with the structural power and takes courageous decision. Thus, Maghuram generates human right to Goharaki by taking support of FNC and he becomes daring agency in his community.

Maghuram creates the educational environmental situation to Goharaki although he has hard economic circumstance. After *Kamaiya Mukti* in 2000, Tharus have been free from bonded laborer. But because of the carelessness of government or

no long term plan of the government, they are not given any opportunities: job, shelter, authority over the land, security, etc. They become disadvantaged politically, economically and culturally. They have been free from bondage life however they have the problem of food, shelter, education, etc. They work in the farm from early morning in the winter season. It remains unbearable cold environment and in the mid hot day of the summer month. But the parents have been conscious and they send their children to school for their education. In *Jittal Patohiya*, Ganesh Chaudhary judges that parents are in the crop field and they do hard labor in the early morning of the cold season and in the mid hot day of the summer time. They do extreme physical work but the young children are on the way to school or college. They go to school or college in the same time together. The street of Tharu's village is covered by students. The parents behave both son and daughter equally and they give equal chance to them for their bright future. Ganesh Chaudhary observes that Sushila meets Pramila's father who has been doing hard work in the farm and she asks him, "Has Pramila gone to college or not: I have been late today?" (1). He answers wiping sweat on his forehead that he has no idea about it because he is in the field and his daughter has remained at house. Although he does not have other alternative way of living except farming because he is poor, he wishes to send his children to school or college for their bright future. Maghuram is poor but he becomes ready to manage his problems own self. When Goharaki becomes free from bondage life, he feels happy although he has economic trouble. He sends her to school and he becomes busy in social work to make other *kamlaris* free instead of his financial problem. Sharbahari telescopes that Goharaki joins in three in *kamlari*'s school and she becomes first in the class and Maghuram works as the President of *Kamlari Mukti Morcha* to release other *kamlaris*" (94). He believes that man can be happy in freedom but they cannot be

cheerful only through the economic earning. Before leaving Bodhi lawyer, he has not cleared the payment of Goharaki according to the agreement. He needs to pay five thousand rupees to her for one year but he has paid only three thousand rupees.

Maghuram answers to FNC office what to say, he has got payment or not. He has no objection to leave the remaining two thousand rupees (89). He only thinks about his daughter's education and freedom but he never thinks about money. He thinks that property does not give peace to man but freedom provides satisfaction to them.

Liberation creates the educational environment. Education becomes the property of man and it helps to understand the life. Therefore, Maghuram manages the educational environment to Goharaki even though he is surrounded by economic problem.

Goharaki reroutes her lip from *kamlari* to school teacher. Before planning the proper settlement of *kamaiya*, the state announces free to bonded laborer in Nepal in 2000. They face more problems than the past because they can neither work as *kamaiya* for managing food, clothes, etc. nor the government provides any opportunity of job. So, they have no food for eating, clothes for wearing, etc at their home. They have neutral position neither food nor work. They do not have any way of extra income. They fall in deep trouble. Thus, landlords can bargain with them easily. Then, they start to choose the place for their shelter by cutting down trees in the isolated jungle area but the administration uses force to remove them from there. Although they have painful situation after *Kamaiya Mukti*, they are interested towards the education of their children and they start to send their children to school or college for their bright future, as in "Tina-Phula", Ramchandra Chaudhary deals that the father is uneducated but he desires to send his son to college. He encourages his son, "Son, I am uneducated....you should know about your study and you need to study

seriously"(31). The father becomes anxious to his son's education rather than his own economic problem. The son remains far away from his family and he always becomes busy in his study. When he returns his house, he sees that his wife and elderly sister have opened copy and book at home in their leisure time. He meets his younger brothers and they also are excited in studying. The second brother expresses, "I have been prized a copy in *jilebi daud* in school" (30) and the youngest brother mentions that he has been rewarded a copy because he has been second in his class. Although *kamaiya's* economic condition has not improved, they seem happy and they always encourage the young generation to study because it only makes their bright future. So, after *Kamaiya Mukti*, *kamaiyas* are interested towards the education but they have poor economic condition. Goharaki passes S.L.C. in the first division although Maghuram has no good financial condition. She joins in eleven. Although Raman, son of Lal Bahadur Kshetri, loves her very much, she thinks only about her study rather than her relationship with Raman. Afterwards, she is selected as a teacher in a primary school, as Sharbahari opines."She goes to college for studying early in the morning and in the day, she goes to school for teaching "(133). She becomes self-dependant. She changes her total life style by her education. All people respect and address her "madam" in the village. Maghuram and his wife feel proud seeing their daughter as school teacher. She has faced exploitation, oppression, inhuman behavior in landlord's house as being *kamlari* but later, she has no problem in her life. Thus, Goharaki diverts her life from bonded to self-dependent life.

Goharaki performs street drama to remove the *kamlari* system. *Kamlari* system has rooted in the society and NGOs play the crucial role to uplift the life style of bonded laborer through the education and training programs. Children become engaged in master's house because of their parents' loan. In fact, parents receive the

income of daughter and they hope that the daughter would get food, clothes and education but they do not get anything and they face savage behavior there. They have to do housework even in ill period from early morning to late evening. So, on one hand, the NGOs: BASF, SWAN, INSF, etc. manage educational and other training programs. So, *kamaiyas* would get job in local, national and international fields. And on the other hand, they engage in different campaign programs where street drama assumes a notable role among other means including wall paper, radio drama, documentaries broadcasts on TV, gathering and demonstration. They manage different activities in the society. Six hundred *kamlari*'s have been taken to Kathmandu by providing the visual things such as cap, T-shirt, jacket, etc. with campaign slogans. The girls are used to perform street drama so that it would make clear reason why they are sent as *kamlari* and their life style in landlord's house. People would realize the real condition of *kamlaris* through the drama. Monica Mottin argues, "If the acting is real, so are the tears or the joy experienced while dancing. And they are a measure of the actual sharing, people cried as if it was real, not drama" (11) people can collect the experience of them. The voices are for their liberation. The girls stand against of their parents or landlords through drama, as Mottin synthesizes that their voices and movement are powerful on the stage and they are real. The voices and movements donate the "social movement" for their liberation (12). The dramas become effective to demolish *kamlari* system. On one hand, Goharaki studies in school and on the other hand, she gives speech and demonstrates street dramas related events with *kamlari*. She thinks that she would not stop the movement after her freedom but she would handle the effective movements to make all girls free from bondage life. She gives speech and makes conscious to everyone that no one would keep young girls as *kamlari* and the parents would send their daughters to school for

education. She gets chance to sing songs and demonstrate street drama against of the *kamlari* system because *kamlari* abolishing institutions provide the plate form to her in Kathmandu. Sharbahari explains that she has been engaged to encourage other *kamlaris* to be free from bondage life (104). She performs dramas and deals the reason why young girls are sent as *kamlari* and how they are behaved in landlord's house. She threatens the parents and landlords that they have done mistake. Her mother is uneducated and she wishes Goharaki to concentrate in her study. But Goharaki answers her mother that moving outside or managing different activity is also education (104). She does not like to collect only the experience of bookish knowledge but social activities make everyone perfect. She plays the role of agency to remove *kamlari* system. Therefore, Goharaki demonstrates street dramas and gives speeches against of *kamlari* system to remove it from the society.

Maghuram and Goharaki play the role of agency to rescue *kamlaris*.

Maghuram ploughs Lal Bahadur Kshetri's land for share crop because he is landless. Stepping his weakness, Kshetri bargains with Maghuram that he would allow him to plough his land for sharecrop when he sends his daughter Goharaki to Kshetri's relative's Bodhi Lawyer's house as *kamlari*. Goharaki desires to study but she is sent as *kamlari*. Kshetri has already explained that she would have happy life because she would get food, clothes and education there but she faces cruel behavior there. She has to hard work from early morning to late evening and she eats what they have left. Sometime, she has to eat food without vegetable and little food. When she desires to go to school, *malikni* beats her with stick. She is not allowed to return to her parents' house even in Dashain and her aunt's marriage ceremony. She faces sexual harassment there. Maghuram and his wife feel uneasy to send her as *kamlari* but they forcefully accept it because of their poverty. Power incorporates not only the state but



the local aristocrat accounts. They make an appearance the issue of economic problem. It leads poor people to victimization and exploitation. They work in the field and housework activities. Goharaki cannot return to her parents' house and Maghuram cannot meet her going to her master's house. They remain under cruel behavior but they cannot speak against of sexual abuse, oppression and domination. NGOs: BASE, INSFC, SWAN, FNC, etc have led the way of developing comprehensive programs to address the problems of *kamaiya*. BASE has worked in the educational field as formal education to children and non-formal education for adults and INSEC occupies the field of human right of bonded laborer. Maghuram develops education of human right through non-formal literacy program. He takes support of FNC and makes Goharaki liberate. He challenges the previous structural power. When Goharaki becomes unbound, she studies in school and becomes teacher. She spends self dependent life. On one hand, Maghuram leads different programs to abolish *kamlari* system being the President of *Kamlari Mukti Morcha* and on the other hand, Goharaki demonstrates street dramas to make conscious landlords who have kept *kamlaris* in their house and the parents who have sent their daughter as *kamlari*. So, being agency, both father and daughter play the vital role to rescue the young girls from bonded life in Tharu community.

Tharus become bonded laborer in elite caste's house and they create agency to fight against of the *kamaiya* system. Then, they become liberate in their society. Hill based people capture the land of Terai which belongs to Tharus. Being landless, they collect the loan for buying medicine, food, etc. in higher interest rate. They cannot return it in time and then, they become bonded laborer. They face humiliation, exploitation, etc. in the landlord's house; men with physical work and women as sexual instrument. Chatkaluwa performs the structural power and he dominates

bonded laborer cruelly. Nageshwar and Bujhna's family members serve him with little salary. He attacks Nageshwar's wife and daughter with sexual intention. He kills all of them and dismisses the case with the help of administration. He always demands work from Bujhna in any condition. He has to be busy in Chatkaluwa's house when his son has fallen seriously ill. Therefore, *kamaiyas* face inhuman behavior of landlord and they have no human recognition in their society. Thus, different organizations try to uplift *kamaiya's* life by fighting against the structural domination of local landlords but they become failure because there is no involvement of *kamaiya*. Bujhna plays the role of agency and he gathers all *kamaiyas*. He conducts meetings again and again. They become aware towards their right and they manage different strikes against landlords' cruel nature. He empowers them to make effective their movement but the landlords cannot accept Bujhna's role. They blame him that he has involvement in murdering case of Chatkaluwa although he has no involvement in the case. The structural authority arrests and kills him when he is searching freedom for himself and other bonded laborers. Therefore, Bujhna faces the structural elimination.

Furthermore, Sharbahari presents the successful agency in his novel.

Maghuram sends Goharaki as *kamlari* because Kshetri bargains with him that if he sends her as *kamlari*, he would provide his land to him for *adhiya batiya*. Then, she faces inhuman behavior there. She weeps alone in the night. She eats little food what they have left. When she desires to go to school, she is beaten. Maghuram also feels sad by seeing her poor condition but he cannot object at first but when NGOs teach him about the education of human right and liberation, he objects to the long established structural power. Afterwards, he makes Goharaki free from bonded life. She becomes self dependent through the education and gets a job. They do not stop

their mission to protest against of the long rooted authority. They regularly encourage all bonded laborers to do struggle for their right. Magharam holds *Kamlari Mukti Morcha* continuously although he does not have sound economic condition and as far as, Goharaki demonstrates street drama, stories related with *kamlari*. She threatens landlords who have kept bonded laborers in their house. So, they become liberate and they make all bonded laborers free. Then, all *kamaiyas* spend free life in the society. Thus, in *Churiniyan*, the agency becomes failure and he sacrifices his life while searching freedom of *kamaiyas* but in *Lal Kerani*, the agency gets achievement and they make liberate to themselves and other all *kamaiyas*.

### **Chapter III. Structural Barriers: Challenges to the Formation of Tharu Agency**

Tharus become *kamaiya* because of lack of income source. The state's existence is connected with elite caste. Power concentrates on the externalization combination of effects and possibilities as a fashion of historical existence of people. Individuality is incorporated as active historical form of previous generations which affect and are affected with the specific historical power relation. Tharus are indigenous people in Terai and they depend on agriculture. When elite caste gets opportunity to settle to Terai, Tharus become landless. They have no space in their place. Tharus remain under the lack of integration into administration of the state and to state patronage. They are used as only the source of laborer. The elite castes have full authority to operate the state's power and they can use Tharus as free laborers in their farm. Because of not having any source of income, they start to be *kamaiya* or to plough *zamindar's* land for sharecrop. Maghuram ploughs *Lal Bahadur Kshetri's* land for *adhiya batiya* and he is not free. Kshetri forces him to negotiate to send Goharaki as *kamlari*. Although he likes her to send to school, he sends her as *kamlari* to Kshetri's relative's house. Bujhna has been landless and he becomes bonded laborer in Chatkaluwa's house. He gets little salary but his wife and son work free cost. Chatkaluwa always demands work in any condition. Nageshwar, his wife and Sempatiya are also bonded laborer in Chatkaluwa's house. They do not have any existence there. Nageshwar kills them and he manages the cases easily with the help of administration. Tharus do not have any connection with the state but Chatkaluwa has good relation with local and central authority. Because of the historical pattern, landlords have connection with the state's authority. Local elites use the power and affect the society with historical influences but Tharus have no authority and remain

as bonded laborer or plough landlord's land for *adhiya batiya*. Therefore, because of Tharus' lower economic status, elite caste rules them.

Furthermore, human body is hierarchized such as masculine and feminine and they are behaved differently in the same economic condition. Landlords capture Terai land and they seize the power to rule the society. They influence the whole society. When father wants to plough *zamindar's* land for *adhiya batiya*, he has to send his daughter as *kamlari*. When man works as *kamaiya*, he gets little salary. He has to work in the field and faces physical brutality but his wife and daughter have to be domestic worker without salary and they face sexual barbaric condition. Being bonded laborer, they face humiliation, exploitation, injustice, discrimination and oppression. It is connected with body in term of feminine and masculine that man works hard in the field but woman is treated as the object of pleasure. When landlords keep man in the trap, the man retains woman entrap to solve the problem. Goharaki goes to unknown person's house as a *kamlari* because of her father's economic problem. Although she desires to study, she has to follow her father's decision. She faces inhuman behavior in master's house. When she expresses her desire to go to school, she is beaten there. She has to do all housework activities; cooking meal, making tea, cutting grass, etc. She does not get holiday even in festival and in her relative's marriage ceremony. She eats what they have left, very little and sometime without vegetable. Maghuram becomes silent and he leaves her there even though he is familiar with her difficulties. She gets sufferings because of being woman. Nageshwar, his wife and Sempatiya work as bonded laborer at Chatkaluwa's house. He faces the financial and physical trouble but Sempatiya and her mother face the sexual exploitation there. They work without salary from early morning to late evening. They have to fulfill sexual desire of Chatkaluwa. When they reject to him,

they have to face the death. Nageshwar faces physical hardship because of the economic problem but Sempatiya and her mother get mental suffering and sexual exploitation with physical troubles. So, man and woman are graded and they are acted differently in the same financial circumstance.

Nonetheless, the structural exploitation creates self-agency to bring change in the society. Power influences people and it affects their future. The local feudal continues the concept of autonomy and self-rule figure subdues poor people creating higher and lower status. Man does not get proper salary and woman is marginalized sexually because of the ground role of gender division of labor. Resistance identifies the different modes of social power and it attaches the individual's role as the agent in the society. Individual is the vehicle of power and self-investigation generates the role of self-formation. The agency handles the society and he follows the way of resistance. Bujhna and Maghuram are controlled by local landlords that Bujhna with his family members work as *kamaiyas* and Maghuram sends Goharaki as *kamlari* when he desires to plough the land of Chatkaluwa for *adhiya batiya*. They do not get proper salary and they get inhuman suffering. They are scolded, beaten and threatened but women face sexual exploitation. Therefore, Bujhna conducts meetings with other *kamaiyas*. He encourages them to stand against of the brutal behavior of landlords. He manages horizontal movement by gathering all *kamaiyas*. He advocates them to be united and then, all men and women come out to the street against of landlords and to gain right in the leadership of Bujhna. He creates importance of self-reflection, the idea of agency. Hence, taking different types of trainings, Maghuram takes bold decision and he denies sending Goharaki as *kamlari*. He becomes ready to leave two thousand rupees which Goharaki would get from her master. He challenges the structural authority and sends Goharaki to school. After getting education, Goharaki

does not think only about her own future but she always becomes active to release other *kamlaris*. She stands against of exploitation, subjugation, oppression, etc. of landlords. She gives warning to landlords who have kept *kamlari* at their house. She never feels afraid of the structural domination. Thus, Bujhna, Maghuram, and Goharaki challenge the organizational ill treatment creating the role of agency.

In addition, Bujhna faces the structural elimination because the local feudal thinks that he has been the barrier for them in the society. Tharus remain under the lack of integration into administration of the state because of the negligence of the nation. Thus, nation provides space to hill-based people to occupy the land of Terai. So, the indigenous Tharus become landless and they remain only as the essential source of labor. The state never thinks about equal opportunity to all classes but it provides every power to elite caste. So, it helps Tharus to become landless. Then, some of them start to plough landlords' land for sharecrop and others become *kamaiyas*. Tharus who plough for *adhiy abatiya*, they have to send their daughter as *kamlari*. Man, as *kamaiya*, gets low salary and their wife or daughter has to work at landlords' house with free cost. Landlords behave man and women differently that man has to work in the field with physical suffering but woman has to work as domestic worker. As *kamlari*, woman has to work; cooking meal, cleaning clothes, cutting grass, looking after the cattle, etc. from early morning to late evening nearly eighteen hours in a day. They face humiliation, exploitation, suffering, etc. They do not have any existence and space there. They are subjugated and oppressed forever. Landlords dominate Tharus structurally because when they have any problem, they solve it with the help of administration. Bujhna is one *kamaiya* and he has the experience of troublesome how other *kamaiyas* get exploitation of structural brutality. He works in Chatkaluwa's house with low salary and his family members have to be

busy with no salary. Although he is the murderer of poor Tharus, he walks proudly in the society. He does not have any fear but Tharus who are innocent, have fearful situation every time. Bujhna cannot bear the situation, how the structural power dominates Tharus. Being agency, he advocates other *kamaiyas* to struggle against of previous systematic power. He conducts meetings and he manages street demonstration against of the feudalism. All *kamaiyas* become excited to do struggle. Some of them as Janjirawa, Bhebhawa, etc. start to work freely. But other landlords who have used structural authority, do not accept Bujhna and he is accused of and killed in a fake murdering case of Chatkaluwa although he has no involvement in it. So, Bujhna faces systematic abolition and he accepts demise at last.

Finally, Goharaki creates self rescuing position through her education.

Landlords exercise power over bonded laborer in different structures and *kamaiyas* face inhuman, brutal and cruel behavior of them. Being landless, Tharus have to plough the land of *zamindars* and they bargain to send their daughters as *kamlari* if they want to plough for sharecrop. They agree to send their daughter as *kamlari* because they do not have any other occupation. The parents have two purposes of sending their daughters as *kamlari*; the first trust is that they would get good opportunity of food, clothes and education there and the second motive is that they would not have any financial burden of them. But the daughter never gets favorable situation there. They face discrimination; exploitation, etc. and they have to do all activities such as cleaning the house, preparing the food, caring the domestic animals every day. They do not get any holiday even in festivals. They get little food which the members have left and sometime without vegetable. They do not find even pen and copy instead of going to school. They face sorrowful condition with no right. Maghuram ploughs Lal Bahadur Chhetri's land and he is forced to send Goharaki as



*kamlari*. Then, poor Maghuram sends his daughter at her child age. She faces pitiable situations; threatening, beating, violation, etc. there. She does not have holiday even in 'Dashain' festival and her aunt's marriage ceremony. When she expresses her aspiration of studying, she is beaten. She does not have enough food to fulfill her stomach even. Maghuram faces mental trouble and Goharaki accepts unsocial and brutal behavior physically and mentally. So, she is more marginalized than her father faces in the same financial trouble because of gender differences. She struggles and becomes free by the help of her father and the support of FNC organization. She continuously studies and gets a job in a school. She becomes independent. On one hand, she has been self-standing and on the other hand, she performs street dramas with the stories related with *kamlari's* life and she threatens landlords who have kept *kamlaris*. She gives speech against of *kamlari* system. Maghuram also plays the vital role to abolish *kamlari* system taking the post of President of *Kamlari Mukti Morcha*. Therefore, both Goharaki and Maghuram manage comfortable situation to release young girls from *kamlari* life and they generate self-rescuing situation.

## Works Cited

- Chatterjee, Partha. "For an Indian History of Peasant Struggle." *Social Scientist*, vol. 16, no. 11, 1988, pp. 3-17.
- Chaudhary, Bhojraj. *Tiriya Jalam* [Life of Woman]. Bhojraj Chaudhary, 2006.
- Chaudhary, Buddhi Ram. *A Study of Free-Bonded Laborer (Mukta Kamaiya) in Nepal*. M. A. Dissertation, Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation Hiroshima University, 2011.
- Chaudhary, Dil Bahadur. "Two Words with Subhakamana." *Tiriya Jalam* [Life of Woman]. Bhojraj Chaudhary, 2006, pp. i.
- Chaudhary, Ganesh. *Jittala Patohiya* [Winner Daughter-in-Law]. Shree Prasad Chaudhary, 2013.
- Chaudhary, Laxminarayan. "Shuvakamana." *Jittal Patohiya* [Winner Daughter-in-Law]. Shree Prasad Chaudhary, 2013, pp. iv.
- Chaudhary, Maniram. *Bidhawa* [Widow]. Maniram Chaudhary, 2001.
- Chaudhary, Ramchandra. "Tina Phula". *New Path*. Tikaram Chaudhary, vol. 4, 2019, pp.29-33.
- David A. Nicholls. *Body Politics: A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis of Physiotherapy practice*. PH.D Dissertation, School of Health Science, Division of Health Science, University of South Australia, 2008.
- Dyrberg, Torben Bech. "Foucault on Parrhesia: The Autonomy of Politics and Democracy." *Political Theory*. Sage Publication, Inc., vol. 44, no. 20, 2016, pp. 265-288.
- Foucault, Michael. *Power/ Knowledge*. Harvester Press, 1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The History of Sexuality*. Translated by Robert Hurley, Panthon Books, 1978.

- Guneratne, Arjun. "Tharu-State Relationship in Nepal and India." *Himalayan Studies*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2010, pp. 19-28.
- King, Angela. "The Prisoner of Gender: Foucault and Discipline of the Female Body". *Journal of International Women's Study*, vol. 5, issue 2, 2004, pp. 29-39.
- Kopila, Chhabilal. *Churiniyan* [Ghost Figure]. Alaudin Smriti Sahityik Samman Pratishthan, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Muktik Khoj* [Quest for Liberation]. Atirikta Prakashan, 2002.
- Lawa Juni* [New Life]. Directed by K. L. Pidita. Pahal Nepal, 2000.
- Mottin, Monica. "Kamlari Voices and Movement: Repositioning Tharu Indigenous Artistic Knowledge into Global Activism." ASA Conference-Art and Activism- New Delhi, April 4th, 2012.
- MoWCSW. Children Act 1992. Singh Durbar, Kathmandu: Ministry of Women and Social Welfare. *Nepal Law Books*, 1992.
- Pant, Hemraj. "Mantabya." *Bidhawa* [Widow]. Maniram Chaudhary, 2001, pp. ii.
- Robertson, Adam and Shisham Mishra. *Force to Plough*. Edited by Hugo Plowden, Mike Dottridge, Margret O'Grady, Anti-Slavery International (London) and Informal Sector Service Center (Kathmandu), 1997.
- Sharbahari, Krishnaraj. "Fiction Written in Tharu Literature and Churiniyan Fiction." *Churiniyan* [Ghost Figure]. Alaudin Smriti Sahityik Samman Pratishthan, 2012, pp. iv.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "This Bud Changes into Flower Fast." *Muktik Khoj* [Quest for Liberation]. Atirikta Prakashan, 2002, pp. i.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Fatal Karama* [Shattered Fate]. Junubunu Prakashan, 1998
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Gantabya* [Destination]. Nirantar Prakashan, 2002.

- — —. *Lal Kerani*[Morning Ray]. Tharu Langue and Literature Favoritisms Forum, 2017.
- Spinks, Conner Chivone. "Body Politics within the Body Politics: Ghanaian Disabled Communities and their Relationship to Power". *Independent Study Project*, 2010, pp. 1-29.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary N. and L. Grasberg, Mack million, 1988,pp. 271-313.
- Tabish, Ashaphak."Prakashakiya." *Churiniyan* [Ghost Figure]. Alaudin Smriti Sahityik Samman Pratisthan, 2012, pp. ix.
- Wong, James. "Foucault and Autonomy." *Archives for Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy*, vol .96, no.3, 2010, pp.277-290.